

CAN LOUDSPEAKERS BE TESTED? by Norman H. Crowhurst

high fidelity

APRIL THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS 60 CENTS

ACCENT ON

BEETHOVEN

THE
SYMPHONIES
IN STEREO

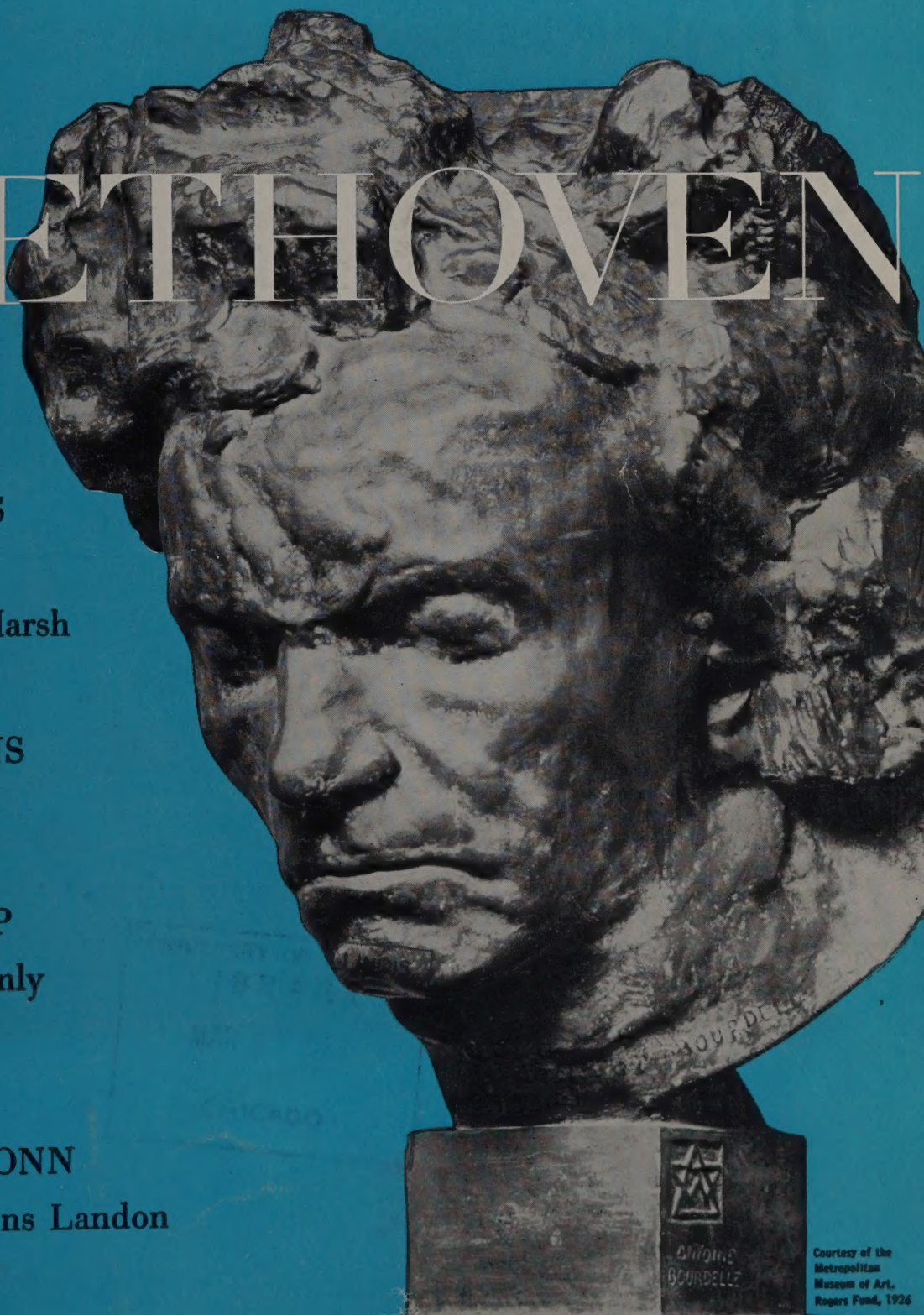
by Robert C. Marsh

REFLECTIONS
ON A
GOODLY
FELLOWSHIP

by John M. Conly

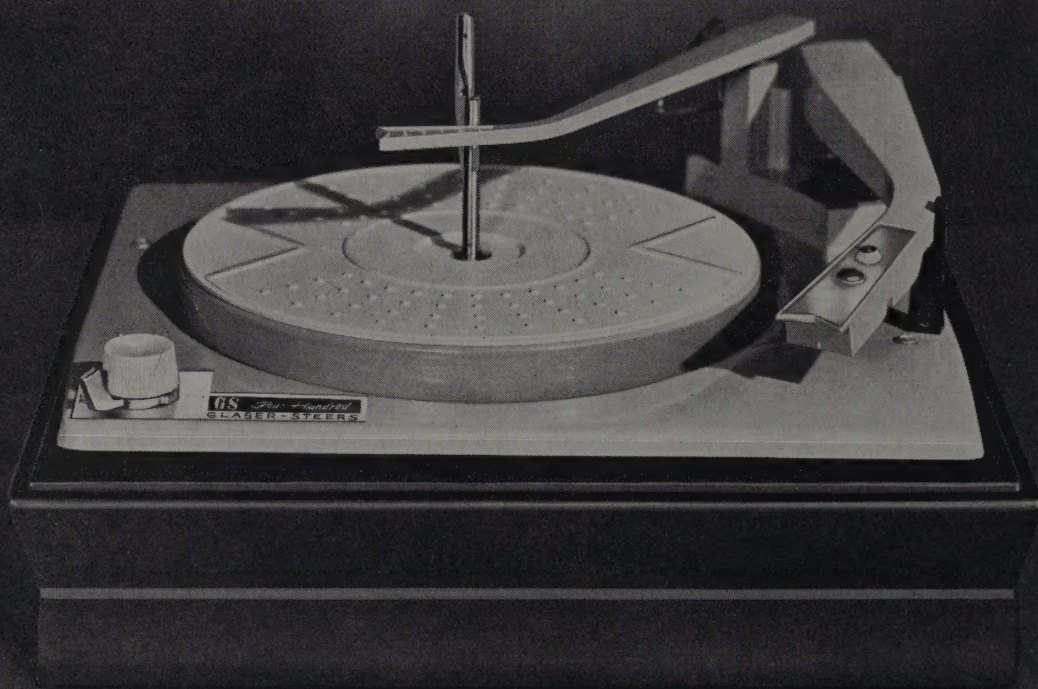
IT ALL
BEGAN IN BONN

by H. C. Robbins Landon



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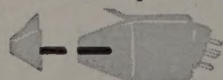
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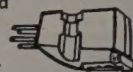


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APRIL 1960

volume 10

number 4

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ADVERTISING

Main Office

Claire N. Eddings, The Publishing House
Great Barrington, Mass. Telephone 1300

New York

1564 Broadway, New York 36
Telephone: Plaza 7-2800
Bert Covit, Sy Resnick

Chicago

188 W. Randolph St., Chicago 1
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A dedicated Beethovenian speaks, in all sincerity, of the glory and the grandeur.

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In the art of interpreting Beethoven, who wears the robes of authority?

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It was an ordinary provincial town where Beethoven spent his first twenty-two years—and from which, not unexpectedly, he escaped.

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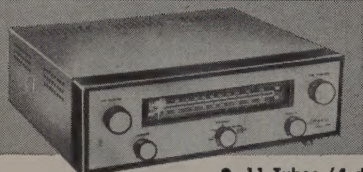
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AUTHORitatively Speaking

John M. Conly, music critic for the *Atlantic Monthly* and Chairman of HIGH FIDELITY's Editorial Board, is currently in the process of having his house remodeled to provide a detached soundproof study-listening room. It seems that when Mrs. Conly has the ladies in for tea, or somebody wants to run the vacuum cleaner, Beethoven gets interfered with. Mr. Conly will have none of that, as anyone can infer from reading this dedicated Beethovenian's "Reflections on a Goodly Fellowship," p. 34.

With his present appearance in this journal (p. 37), Peter J. Pirie makes his first bow in any American publication. Mr. Pirie came to his present trade of music critic by way of studies in piano, conducting, and composing, and through long exposure to records. Known as a Beethoven specialist, he is also an authority on English music—a love born of his feeling for the English landscape and especially for his native Sussex, he writes us. He also writes that "English people have a monumental lack of interest in the lives of authors." We shall let him know that a similar indifference does not hold for their American cousins.

H. C. Robbins Landon, whose name has appeared frequently in these pages over the last year, has become a member of the family. He is now our official European Editor. This means, we hope, that we will have from his pen more excursions into musical scenes, past and present. This month he visits Beethoven's birthplace: see p. 40.

To HIGH FIDELITY's list of discographies, we add the forty-seventh: "The Beethoven Symphonies in Stereo" (p. 44), written by Robert C. Marsh, the Chicago *Sun-Times'* music man and our monthly record reviewer. Mr. Marsh will produce a book on Beethoven some day, but we can't be blamed for welcoming its postponement while he produces contributions for us.

Norman H. Crowhurst continues to be one of the most prolific authors we know. His *Hi-Fi Made Easy* (Gernsback Library) has just been published, and he's still found time to give us his observations on the far from easy question "Can Loudspeakers Be Tested?" (p. 46). The Audio Engineering Society's award of a fellowship to Mr. Crowhurst for his contributions to audio technology was about the most logical and expected thing we could imagine.

High Fidelity, April 1960, Vol. 10, No. 4. Published monthly by The Billboard Publishing Co., publishers of The Billboard, Vend, Funspot, and The Billboard International. Telephone: Great Barrington 1300. Member Audit Bureau of Circulations.

Editorial Correspondence should be addressed to The Editor, Great Barrington, Mass. Editorial contributions will be welcomed. Payment for articles accepted will be arranged prior to publication. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage.

Subscriptions, change of address notices, undelivered copies, orders for subscriptions should be addressed to High Fidelity Magazine, 2160 Patterson Street, Cincinnati 22, Ohio.

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



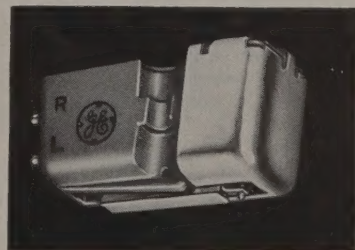
General Electric VR-22 Stereo Cartridge—Superior in the four vital areas

Stop to think for a moment of all the jobs required of a stereo cartridge: It must track, with utmost precision, in not one but two directions. It must separate the two stereo channels inscribed in a single record groove. It must perform smoothly in mid-range and at both ends of the audible frequency spectrum. And it must do all these things without producing noticeable hum or noise. Only a fantastically sensitive and precise instrument like the General Electric VR-22 can do all these jobs successfully.

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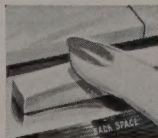
Model T-1600 with remote control, ceramic-type microphone; two reels; tape and cords, \$299.50.

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General Electric Bookshelf Speaker System—Superior in the four vital areas

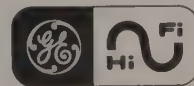
No matter how good your other components, what you ultimately hear from your stereo system will be no better than your speakers. For this reason, exceptional care should be exercised in speaker selection. The important things to watch for are **size** (remember, you'll need two), **bass sound power level**, **high frequency performance**, and **appearance**. Appearance is especially important in speakers because they form an integral part of your room decor.

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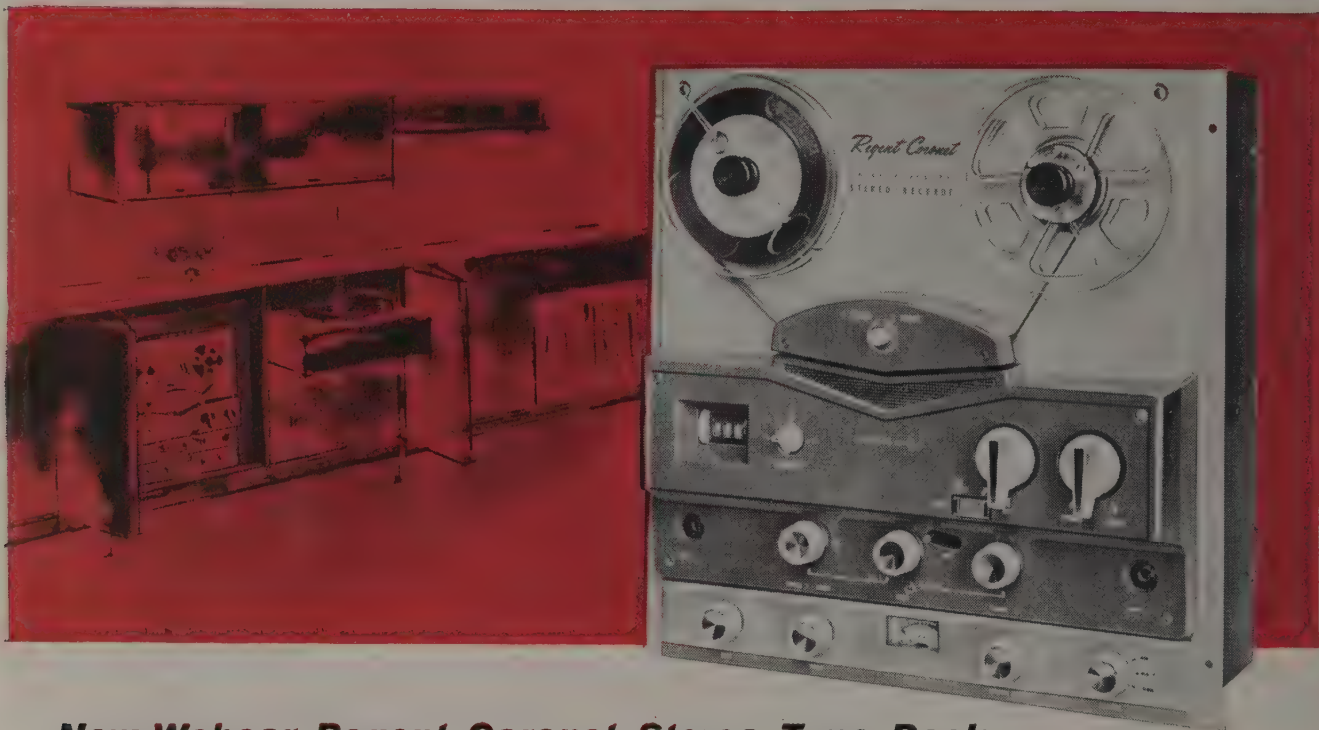
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General Electric Company, Audio Products Section, Auburn, N. Y.



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Notes

FROM



Abroad

PARIS—The bourgeoisie is getting wary. So far this season the *avant-garde* "Domaine Musical" concerts, animated by brilliant, truculent young Pierre Boulez, have not caused a single ruction. Musical history has subsided into a chronicle.

We have had, of course, a bit of nostalgic insolence. The other evening, in the vast hall of the Palais de Chaillot, a respectful audience heard Carlheinz Stockhausen's *Zyklus*, a ten-minute percussion solo described in the program as "oscillating continuously between absolute determination and extreme ambiguity." When the applause began to be marred by audible grumbling, Boulez cut in swiftly. "Since," he announced, "there are some people who don't like that, we are going to play it again." But the "some people" did not rise to the provocation.

The new music in Paris, as elsewhere, is as international as Action painting. A list of composers for this year would include the Frenchmen Boulez and Jean Barraqué, the Germans Stockhausen and Hans Werner Henze, the Italians Bruno Maderna and Luciano Berio, the Israeli Roman Haubenstock-Ramati, the Belgian Henri Pousseur, the Argentine Mauricio Kagel, the Japanese Yorisune Matsudeira. The feeling here is that our next Stravinsky may be one of these—and that makes the absence of American names rather significant.

Perhaps one should say "our next Webern." Stravinsky is honored in the *Domaine Musical* as an old master who still, in Boulez's words, "prefers seeking to security," and his rhythms and magic atmosphere are admired. But he is not much of an influence. Nor is Schoenberg, whom the people around Boulez tend to regard as a Romantic backslider. Olivier Messiaen is more important, since both Boulez and Stockhausen studied under him. Most of these young dodecaphonists, however, accept only Webern as an authentic hero. From their point of view he was the first truly modern musical man. And even Webern must be taken as merely a point of departure: he is not much help, for example, in today's musical exploration of articulated space.

The popular image of serialist composers is of men living in airless rooms, nourished

Continued on next page

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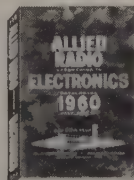
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Continued from preceding page

only by mutual admiration. Things are different in the Domaine Musical. The concerts have been well attended this year, and covered by the daily press as routine, if not quite normal, Parisian musical events. Boulez is in no danger of becoming a *monstre sacré* like Callas or Gyorgy Cziffra, but he and his enterprise are known to the general public.

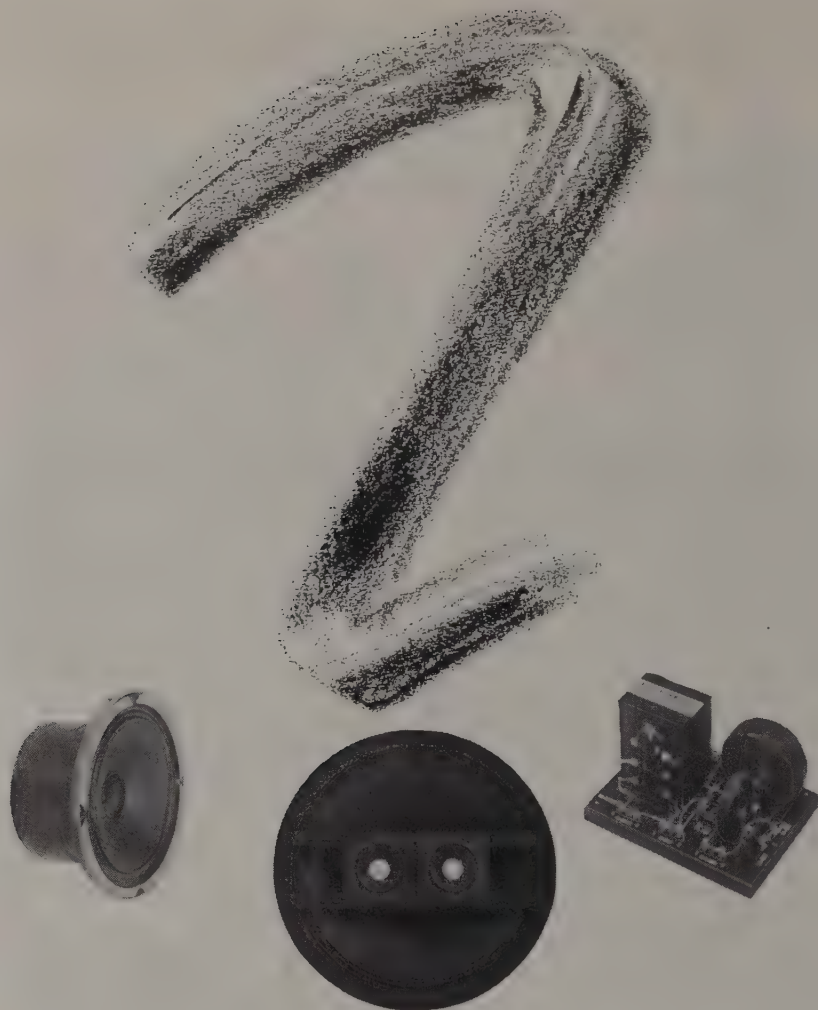
Moreover, he and the group of composers associated with him have an important link with the outside world in the series of records called *Présence de la musique contemporaine*, brought out by Véga under the editorship of Lucien Adés (Westminster in America, if they appear). Véga and Adés deserve much praise for their intelligent devotion to this thoroughly noncommercial operation, since some of this music is as hard as jazz to preserve on paper. The most recent recording, still on tape at this writing, is of Boulez's *Structures* and Pousseur's *Mobile*, both for two pianos, Stockhausen's *Klavierstück 6*, and Kagel's *Sextuor à cordes*. Boulez directs; David Tudor and Aloys and Alfons Kontarsky are the pianists.

ROY McMULLEN

LONDON—Portly, bald, and beaming, Josef Krips has been a familiar of London podiums since 1947, when he conducted the newly salvaged Vienna State Opera on its first postwar visit to Covent Garden. In those days he still showed evidence of his trials under the Nazis. As "non-Aryan," he was dismissed from conducting posts in Germany and Austria, where he had figured prominently among younger virtuosos of the baton, and was put to work at such employments as truck loader in a pickle factory. At one time he used to say that the hardships of 1945 alone had taken ten years off his life.

I should say that his conducting successes since then have put the ten years back. With every visit to London, Krips seems more beaming and, for all his bulk, more resilient than ever. His next duty tour at the Royal Festival Hall is scheduled for next month, when he is due to conduct with the London Symphony Orchestra yet another Beethoven cycle (his tenth annual one, to be exact), during which Wolfgang Schneiderhan and Artur Rubinstein are to sandwich the Violin Concerto and all the piano concertos between all the symphonies. Krips has told the orchestra that this time he will make do with four hours' rehearsal per concert as compared with the normal six hours or (in the case of the Ninth Symphony) nine.

The fact is that he regards the men as pretty well Beethoven-groomed already as a result of their recent recording sessions at Walthamstow for Everest. The Everest team had planned with Krips and the orchestra for twenty-eight sessions to cover all nine

Continued on page 14

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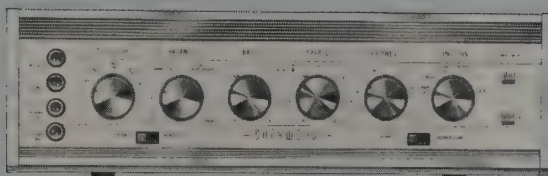
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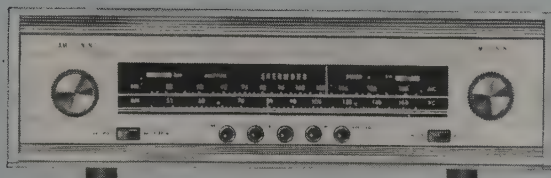
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SOUNDTALK

NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 12



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symphonies. They finished with three sessions in hand. The first symphony on their schedule was No. 9—with the BBC Chorus; Jennifer Vyvyan, soprano; Donald Bell, the Canadian bass; Shirley Carter, the American contralto who sings with the Düsseldorf Opera; and another U. S. import, Rudolf Petrak (tenor), who was engaged when it was found that our Richard Lewis was precommitted to an American concert tour.

Four sessions were devoted to the Ninth, with an extra hour for retouches to the first movement. The last of the series to be taped was the No. 2. As usual, all the first-desk men listened to the playbacks, together with as many rank-and-file players as could crowd their way into the twenty-foot by ten dressing room backstage. The recordings had been made, in accordance with standard Everest practice, on 35-millimeter magnetic tape. At the playbacks Krips spoke glowingly of Everest techniques which, he reported, made the LSO sound as good as the Vienna Philharmonic. The choral finale of the Ninth, he beamed, was just from Heaven.

Both at playbacks and during recording intermissions, Krips aired his pet theories about phrasing. Of the slow movement of No. 4, he said it was a pity he had to beat time at all; ideally, the entire movement should be emitted, as it were, on one breath.



Krips

I remember Krips going into this with me at a time when his English was even more bizarre than is the case now. He had much to say about Brace, Breezing, Noice—i.e., breath, breathing, noise. What was not

brace was mere noice. "I am conducting with the brace," he explained. "What is brace? It is the soul. What is the soul? It is the divine part of a human being. From there, from the divine part, come the music."

Like all Krips occasions, the recent Walthamstow sessions ended in an atmosphere of congratulation. Sample from E. M. Fleischmann, the London Symphony's secretary: "Everything went with marvelous smoothness. These twenty-five sessions have been a fantastic three-sided love affair between Joe, Beethoven, and the orchestra." The rest of us must wait and see. The records are expected to be released simultaneously with Krips's May Festival Hall appearances. By that time Everest plans to be again in possession at Walthamstow.

More Everest Plans. It is on the cards that with Krips and the LSO the company will record more centenary-year Mahler. (Already Everest has done Mahler's Ninth there

Continued on page 16

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NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 14

with the London Symphony and Leopold Ludwig.) The LSO is just about as steeped in Mahler as it is in Beethoven. For the BBC last year it taped Symphonies 4, 5, and 8 (the "Symphony of a Thousand") as well as *Das Lied von der Erde*, *Das klagende Lied*, and the *Seven Last Songs*. Still awaiting release over the air at this writing, these performances should be first-rate preparation for any Mahler program that Everest has lined up.

Another probable Everest date, for early June, is with the seventy-eight-year-old Hungarian composer Zoltán Kodály, who is booked to conduct his *Peacock Variations* and *Theatre Overture* at a Festival Hall concert at which Fischer-Dieskau will contribute a group of Kodály songs.

Low Costs, Good Acoustics. Mainspring behind Everest's Walthamstow doings is a rotund and blandly expository being called Bert Whyte, the label's classical artist-and-repertory manager. Bert is short for Albert, "but I never use 'Albert,' because nobody knows who he is." Everest's scheduled May-June stay at Walthamstow will be its fourth since it went over to 35-millimeter magnetic film.

"Why," I asked Whyte, "do you come over here instead of staying home to record?" His answer was the classic one.

"Because," he explained, "it's cheaper to record in Britain than in America, owing to the outrageous rates for symphony recordings charged by the American musicians' union. When you've transported a group of people over here and fed and housed them and paid the musicians' fees, even then it adds up to a considerable saving over what could be done in the United States."

"Any other factor?"

"Yes: the dearth of good halls in New York from the acoustical standpoint. There are lots of suitable halls throughout England. Not all of them, admittedly, are as good as Kingsway Hall. We'd like Kingsway very much for ourselves, but it is tied up far ahead for other companies."

When last here (not for the Beethoven-Krips schedule, which musical director Raoul Poldiak managed), Whyte recorded a run of thirteen symphonies or symphonic works but, as a matter of marketing tactics, declined to name more than a few of them. He put his 1960 classical recording budget at half a million dollars, most of which was to be spent in Europe.

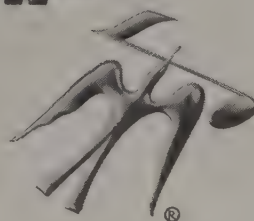
CHARLES REID



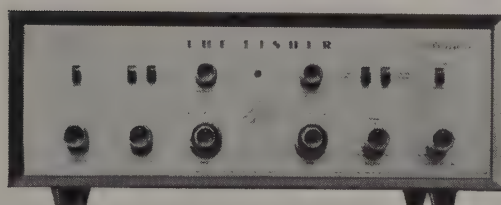
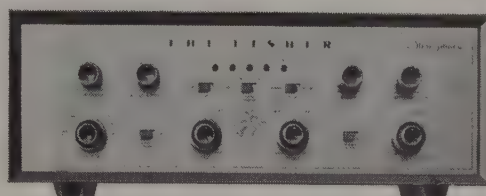
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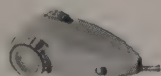
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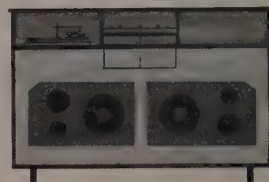
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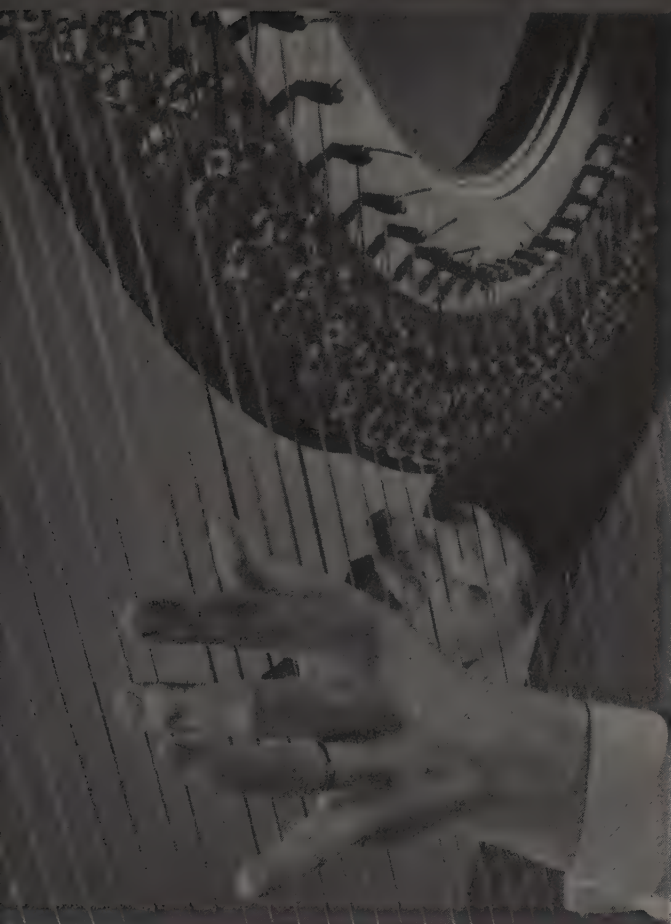
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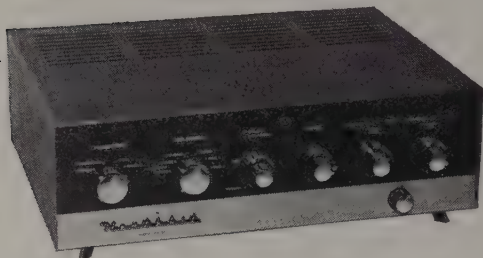
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Every modern feature and convenience has been incorporated into this new stereo amplifier—a truly remarkable instrument at its low, low Heathkit price. A complete 25/25 watt stereo power and control center (50 watts mono) ... 5 switch-selected inputs for each channel including tape head input ... new mixed center speaker output ... stereo reverse and balance controls ... special channel separation control ... separate tone controls for each channel with ganged volume controls ... all of these deluxe elements assure you of quality performance for years to come. With the AA-50 you have these five inputs for each 25 watt channel: stereo channel for magnetic phono cartridge, RIAA equalized; three high level auxiliary inputs for tuners, TV, etc. There is also an input for a monophonic magnetic phono cartridge, so switched that monophonic records can be played through either or both amplifiers. The special center speaker output fills the "hole in the middle" sound sometimes encountered, or lets you add an extra speaker in the basement, recreation room, etc., through which the automatically "mixed" stereo program material is reproduced monophonically. Nearly all of the components are mounted on two circuit boards, simplifying assembly, minimizing possibility of wiring errors. 30 lbs.

**QUALITY FM PERFORMANCE ...
WITH PROVISION FOR
MULTIPLEX STEREO**



FM-4
\$39⁹⁵

Bring the magic of FM programming into your home with this low cost, easy to assemble Heathkit FM Tuner. A multiplex adapter output jack makes the FM-4 instantly convertible to stereo by plugging-in the style-matched MX-1 FM Multiplex Adapter kit (below). Design features include: better than 2.5 microvolt sensitivity for reliable fringe area reception; automatic frequency control (AFC), eliminating station "drift"; flywheel tuning for fast, effortless station selection; and pre-wired, prealigned and pretested, shielded tuning unit for easy construction and dependable performance of finished kit. The clean-lined design will enhance the appearance of any room of your home. 8 lbs.

**FOR YOU WHO WANT A FINE QUALITY,
LOW COST MANUAL
STEREO RECORD PLAYER ...**



AD-10
\$33⁹⁵

Made by famous Garrard of England, the AD-10 is a compact 4-speed player designed to provide trouble-free performance with low rumble, flutter and wow figures. "Plug-in" cartridge feature. Rubber matted heavy turntable is shock-mounted, and idler wheels retract when turned off to prevent flat spots. Powered by line-filtered, four-pole induction motor at 16, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$, 45 and 78 rpm. Supplied with Sonotone STA4-SD ceramic stereo turnover cartridge with .7 mil diamond and 3 mil sapphire styli. Mechanism and vinyl covered mounting base pre-assembled, arm pre-wired; just attach audio and power cables, install cartridge and mount on base. With 12" record on table, requires 15" W. x 13" D. x 6" H. Color styled in cocoa brown and beige. 10 lbs.

HEATHKIT AD-30: Mechanism only; less cartridge, base, cables. 8 lbs. \$22.95

**LISTEN TO FM
IN STEREO!**



MX-1
\$31⁹⁵

Enjoy the treasures of FM programming in STEREO! An ideal companion for the Heathkit FM-4 Tuner (left), the MX-1 Multiplex adapter may also be used with any other FM tuner to receive FM stereo programs transmitted in accordance with the Crosby system of stereo broadcasting. If your present FM tuner does not have a multiplex adapter output, it can be easily modified following the simple instructions given in the MX-1 manual. Features include a built-in power supply, plus versatile stereo controls. The function selector switch offers choice of: Stereo operation; main (FM) channel operation; and multiplex (sub-channel) operation. Also included are a "dimension" control for adjusting channel separation, "channel balance" control to compensate for different speaker efficiencies, and a phase-reversal switch. 8 lbs.

CIRCLE 50 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

SPECIAL

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AND FOR YOU ...
AN ECONOMY-PLUS STEREO PAIR!



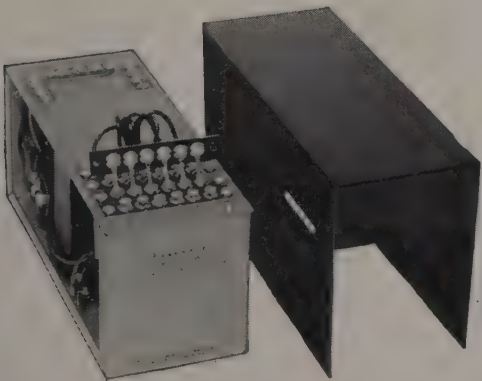
AA-20
\$34⁹⁵

AA-30
\$45⁹⁵

Although these two new Heathkit models are designed as companion pieces, either one can be used with your present stereo system. The pre-amplifier (AA-20) features 4 inputs in each stereo channel and gives you a choice of 6 functions. It will accommodate a magnetic phonograph (RIAA equalized), a crystal or ceramic phonograph, and 2 auxiliary sources (AM-FM tuners, TV, tape recorders, etc.) and is completely self-powered. Shpg. Wt. (AA-20) 8 lbs.

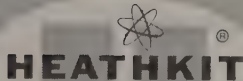
Two hi-fi rated 14-watt high fidelity amplifiers, one for each stereo channel, are packaged in the single, compact, handsomely styled amplifier (AA-30). Suitable for use with any stereo preamp or with a pair of monophonic preamps, it features individual amplifier gain controls and speaker phase reversal switch. Output terminals accommodate 4, 8 and 16 ohm speakers. Shpg. Wt. (AA-30) 21 lbs.

A MONEY SAVING SHORT-CUT TO STEREO MIXED LOWS STEREO CROSSOVER NETWORK



AN-10
\$19⁹⁵

Convert to stereo using just one bass "woofer"; saves buying second bass speaker, permits using more economical "wing" speakers. Delivers non-directional bass frequencies of both channels below 250 cps to the woofer and passes higher frequency stereo channels to a pair of wing speakers. Rated 25 watts per channel. Matches 8 or 16 ohm woofers, 8 ohm high frequency speakers, or Heathkit SS-1, 2, 3. 10 lbs.



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IT COSTS HALF WHAT YOU'D EXPECT
TO PAY ... WHEN YOU DO IT
YOURSELF THE HEATHKIT WAY

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Extend your enjoyment of stereo — make your own to order! Off-the-air stereo via simulcasts, stereo disc or tape recordings offer you excellent sources to build up your tape library. And, with Ekotape components it's easy to achieve professional results.

These superbly crafted units are outstanding values in the stereo field.

Each is matched to the other for high quality performance. Controls are simplified, operation is versatile, yet uncomplicated... in short, Ekotape stereo components are well within the capability range of the serious amateur as they are to the confirmed audiophile. Ask your Ekotape dealer for a demonstration!



Model 362

STEREO TAPE DECK

Records and plays back four-channel and two-channel stereo and monaural tapes. Only three controls for simple operation: channel selector adjusts head for half-track or quarter-track; speed control and off/on switch are combined to neutralize the tape mechanism when in "off" position; central control selects tape direction. Automatic tape-out switch, program selection finder. Horizontal or vertical mounting.



GL04

STEREO RECORD-PLAYBACK PREAMP

Finest construction and superb performance of a professional unit — yet it carries a modest price tag. The GL04 is the ideal dual-channel control center for recording, erasing and playing stereo or monaural tapes. Ten controls — plus a professional-type meter for each channel permits balancing volume visually for both recording and playing back.



GL20-20

DUAL-CHANNEL PREAMPLIFIER-AMPLIFIER

Full 40 watt amplification without drop or distortion! A precisely engineered component with exceptional fidelity. The GL20-20 is a combined control, preamp and amplifier center for either two- or four-channel stereo or monaural playback — in one compact unit. Single selector switch for tuner, ceramic or magnetic phono cartridge, tape playback head. 20 watts output for each channel. Frequency response: flat within 1 db. 20 to 20,000 cps.



GL0M

MICROPHONE MIXER

Versatile unit for recording live stereo. It has provision for up to four crystal, dynamic or other high impedance microphones, or two microphones and two radio tuners or record players. The sensitivity of each one can be independently controlled.

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CIRCLE 111 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS



O the Times! O the Manners!

SIR:

I am sure that one need not be an apologist for singers of the past to take exception to Alan Wagner's article ["The New Golden Age of Opera"] in the January issue.

It is not merely that Mr. Wagner virtually ignores the glories of the past. He attacks the past—and largely out of ignorance. What is worse, he is enthusiastic in his ignorance.

His first premise is that the present age of singers outnumbers the past, always a dubious basis for making an aesthetic judgment. Mr. Wagner therefore lists a few of the very greatest bassos of the beginning of the century and against these lines up every modern bass he can think of, even consenting to include Nicola Moscona and Kim Borg. Yet how many great bassos of the past are not even noticed—e.g., José Mardones, Clarence Whitehill, Vanni-Marcoux, David Bispham, Michael Bohnen, and many others? Is Mr. Wagner attempting a comparison? Is Jerome Hines then the equal of Pol Plançon, whose fabulous technique included trills and rapid coloratura, yet who also possessed a sense of drama which makes his recording of "*Ella giammai m'amo*" a masterpiece of vocal acting, despite the feebleness of the reproduction? Or again, one has only to listen to recordings of the Drum-Major's air from *Le Caïd* as made by Plançon and then by Fernando Corena to see what has happened to the vocal art. . . .

Mr. Wagner goes on to laud the "versatility" of modern singers. It must be understood that Mr. Wagner's definition of the word indicates the ability to sing roles by more than one composer, though there are present-day singers who can hardly manage that. A singer who is truly "not limited in scope" can range over the entire repertory with assurance in every part, as did Lilli Lehmann, who sang Violetta and Brünnhilde and has left recordings made in her old age of "*Sempre libera*" and "*Komm Hoffnung*" to prove that her reputation was well deserved. Or there was Lillian Nordica singing Philine and Brünnhilde in the same season, or Emmy Destinn complaining that the Met would give her *only* fourteen different roles a year. Yet Hilde Gueden is called versatile because she can sing Rosalinde and Musetta.

Continued on page 24



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IMPORTANT NOTICE

TO HIGH FIDELITY

BOOK BUYERS

After May 15, 1960 we will no longer fill orders for books *except* those published by The Wyeth Press. The Wyeth Press is an affiliate of HIGH FIDELITY Magazine and at the present time has two books in print: RECORDS IN REVIEW — 1958 (Price: \$5.95) and RECORDS IN REVIEW — 1959 (Price: \$5.95).

To expedite the closing of our Book Department we offer the following titles at greatly reduced prices. The quantity of each title is limited.

HIGH FIDELITY: A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SOUND REPRODUCTION. Compiled by K. J. Spencer. Foreword by G. A. Briggs. Contains approximately 2,600 entries that represent the whole field of published information and research on high-quality sound reproduction, from the very early days up to and including June 1957. Was \$6.00. **Now \$1.00.** #290

HI-FI YEAR BOOK 1956. Edited by Miles Henslow and published in England. Was \$2.25. **Now 50¢.** #291

MICROPHONES. By the Staff of the Engineering Training Department British Broadcasting Corporation. Published in 1951. Was \$3.25. **Now 50¢.** #292

A few copies of the following titles are available at regular prices:

HIGH FIDELITY RECORD ANNUAL — 1955. \$4.95. #201
 HIGH FIDELITY RECORD ANNUAL — 1956. \$4.50. #237
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LETTERS

Continued from page 22

But Mr. Wagner anticipates all comers. "Nor am I stacking the cards," he says. Nor is he. He is simply discarding all the kings and queens and asking us to play with deuces—and jokers. He cites Lisa Della Casa, for whom the forgetful Mr. Wagner can cease to recall the silvery tunes and superb art of Elisabeth Rethberg. And does Eleanor Steber really outclass "any Mozart soprano you'd care to mention"? Does she really surpass Emma Eames, Johanna Gadschi, Geraldine Farrar, Emmy Destinn, Elisabeth Schumann, Maria Cebotari, and Frida Leider?

Mr. Wagner's greatest error lies, I believe, in his assumption that, because a singer is singing *now*, all predecessors can be forgotten or their merits argued away. I never saw Olive Fremstad's Isolde (did Mr. Wagner?), but I would doubt that Flagstad really dwarfs the memory of her in the minds of those who did hear the "immortal Olive." And Frida Leider's recording of Isolde's narrative suggests that there was something in the part which Mme. Flagstad did not show us. But even the Great Kirsten is not safe. Mr. Wagner cites only her most recent achievements, leaving the glories of the late Thirties to be forgotten with the rest. After all, there is Birgit Nilsson, just as there is Inge Borch for Welitsch. *O tempora! O mores!* . . .

Mr. Wagner concedes us the right to enjoy our nostalgia, but the precious metal which he tells us to seek in the present is all too often fool's gold.

James C. LeFon
 New York, N. Y.

Royalties to Gilels

SIR:

In reviewing the Monitor recordings of the Beethoven Fourth and Fifth Piano Concertos as performed by Emil Gilels and the Leningrad Philharmonic (February 1960) R.C.M. makes the false statement that Angel Records is the only firm which pays royalties to the artist.

On behalf of Monitor Records and Leeds Music Corporation, we wish to advise you that this statement is unjustified and incorrect. Under an agreement with Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga, Moscow, Leeds has the right to license these performances to American record firms. Monitor Records has licensed these performances from Leeds and pays royalties for the releases in question.

Michael Stillman
 Leeds Music Corporation
 New York, N. Y.

The question remains whether Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga turns over the royalties it receives from Monitor to Mr. Gilels.—Ed.

Continued on page 27

GO STEREO

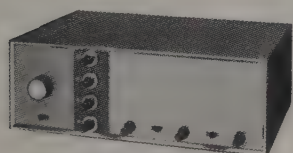
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ALTEC 353A STEREO AMPLIFIER—PREAMPLIFIER



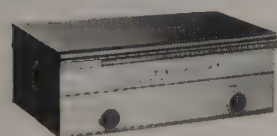
Check the specs—compare it for sensible price!

Start into stereo at the 100-watt peak. The Altec 353A is popular for a reason—it delivers the best specs at a realistic price. 100 watts peak, 50 watts rms continuous, 25 watts nominal per channel, stereo or mono. 2 or 3 channel stereo, dual mike inputs, 14 stereo or mono outputs, 6 stereo or mono inputs. Simplified controls handle 13 separate conditions. Response: 20-20,000 cps at 25 watts, ± 0.5 db; 10-30,000 cps at 1 watt. Feedback type equalization brings distortion to 1% THD at 25 watts 100 cps, each channel. Low noise level, and too many desirable specs to mention here. With cabinet, just **\$225.00**.



355 MONO AMP-PREAMP

No peer in its price class. 20-watt output, 20-22,000 cps frequency range, 7 inputs, 3-position scratch filter and rumble filter, 4 volume controls, separate power switch, adapts to stereo, features eyeletted printed circuitry. Less cabinet, **\$111.00**.



308A FM TUNER

with wide slide-rule dial, automatic lock-on frequency control. 3 IF stages for clear station separation, between-station silencing, stereo multiplex adaptor, FCC radiation certification, low metal cabinet with platinum pink or gold panel. With cabinet, just **\$120**. 307A FM TUNER duplicates 308A except for slide-rule dial. Less cabinet, only **\$99.00**.

345A STEREO POWER AMPLIFIER

Packs two 100 watt peak channels in one package, 60 watt rms continuous, stereo or mono. Flexible controls for 9 separate stereo or mono conditions. Response: ± 1.0 db 10-100,000 cps. **\$270.00**.



306A AM-FM TUNER

features shielded 6 gang condenser, chassis-mounted for perfect grounding; stable, long-lived dry rectifier. Exceeds FCC radiation requirements. AM section features 3 IF stages, providing maximum band-width with very sharp skirt attenuation. FM section features Foster-Seeley (Armstrong) detector, "Cascode" low-noise mixer stage, 2 limiter stages. Less cabinet, **\$199.50**.



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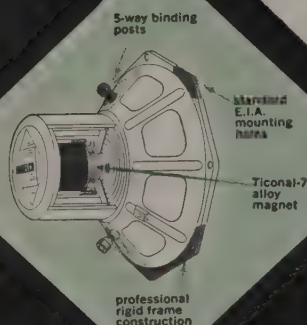


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featuring voice coil magnets of **TICONAL VII**
(30% more powerful than Alnico V)

This new line of 5" to 12" loudspeakers is designed to match the quality requirements of the discriminating music lover... at surprisingly moderate prices.

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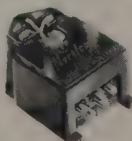


Acoustically designed to achieve moderate size without loss of bass response or unevenness of dispersion. Perfectly matched for bass response of the Norelco T-7 speakers... ideal for most quality 8" to 12" speakers. Available in three sizes, in hand-rubbed Mahogany, Walnut, Blond or Cherry.

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**MAGNETO-DYNAMIC
STEREO CARTRIDGE**

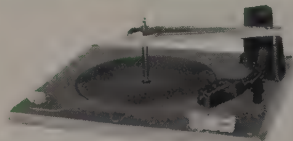
DESIGNED for highest vertical compliance to provide ultimate fidelity, both stereophonic and monophonic... DESIGNED to completely safeguard the full fidelity of your records... DESIGNED for compatibility with virtually any tone arm.



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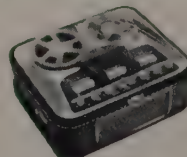
A rugged, versatile, low cost record changer offering years of dependable, trouble-free stereophonic and monophonic reproduction... both manual and automatic operation... Four speeds (78, 45, 33 1/3, 16 rpm)... automatic 7", 10", and 12" intermix.



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TAPE RECORDER (EL3536/54)**

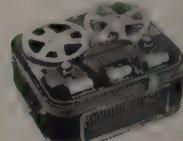
◆ 4-track stereophonic or monophonic recording and playback ◆ 3 tape speeds ◆ completely self-contained, including dual recording and playback preamps, dual power amplifiers, 2 Norelco wide-range speakers, 2nd in lid and stereodynamic microphone.



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The Model EL3516 continues to be the favorite of the nation's schools and music teachers. Its added advantages offered by stereo as well as monaural playback facilities, has made this the world's greatest buy in a monaural tape recorder.



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230 Duffy Avenue, Hicksville, L. I., New York

CIRCLE 78 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 24

Disenchanted

SIR:

I am disgusted and disillusioned.

As a Christmas present to myself I converted my monophonic high-fidelity system to stereo.

After investing a goodly sum for the "best" components, I have what I think most would consider an excellent system.

And now I wonder why I parted with the money and spent time building kits. It isn't that stereo isn't everything and even more than I had been led to believe. It is because record manufacturers, except for one or two, do not take the time or trouble to produce stereo records with quiet surfaces. Some of my forty brand-new stereo discs sound like they were recorded during a hailstorm. I have returned five records to their manufacturers for replacement, and several more are scheduled for return.

I also wonder what has happened to the flat disc. Have you received any unwarped records lately? Record manufacturers had better wake up. If they don't, they will force those interested in good stereo sound to install tape playback equipment.

Stuart Sylvester
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Accolade for Ella

SIR:

I wish to compliment you on the review entitled "Ella Meets the Gershwins with an Assist from Nelson Riddle" by John S. Wilson in the January 1960 issue. In my estimation Miss Fitzgerald has one of the world's most vibrant voices.

Zarine Kunar
Skokie, Ill.

Tombs and Turntables

SIR:

Now I know why the Egyptians built the pyramids ["Egyptians in Vienna," January]—they were trying to devise a steady base for their turntables. They then must have discovered that even a thirteen-acre stone base vibrated. So, plagued by acoustic feedback, the frustrated pharaohs used their turntable bases as tombs.

Ruth Curtis
Washington, Conn.

Verdi Devotee

SIR:

As a lover of opera in general and Verdi in particular, I was delighted with your excellent discography in the January issue. I also enjoyed the article on Sant' Agata. I am looking forward to similar features in the future.

Michael R. Descilo
Berkeley, Calif.

from England...

where the finest is a tradition



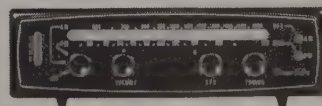
Model SL 71
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Model SPA 21—50-watt Stereo High Fidelity "3-D" Amplifier. \$229.95 Audio Net



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Model DL 7-35 Basic 50-watt Amplifier (100 watts peak). With 2 units: 100-watt stereo with SP 21; 200 watts peak stereo. \$159.95 Audio Net



Model SP 21 Stereophonic-Monophonic Pre-Amplifier Control Unit. \$159.95 Audio Net

traditionally the finest!—and very likely the only sound reproducing equipment to represent a lifetime investment in timeless listening enjoyment. The rewards of owning Beam-Echo are many; among them the knowledge that yours is—and will remain—the best quality stereophonic-high fidelity ever produced.

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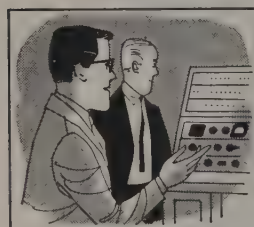
CIRCLE 19 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Years Ahead

NEW BOGEN SRB 40 STEREO RECEIVER



NO ONE BUT BOGEN, builder of over one million high-fidelity and sound-distribution components, could have engineered this new high-fidelity stereo receiver, the SRB 40. A superb all-in-one stereo instrument, it's a highly sensitive FM-AM stereo tuner, it's a versatile stereo audio control center, it's a magnificent 40 watt (20 per channel) stereo amplifier, and it's yours for only \$269.50—a price you'd expect to pay for a comparable tuner alone!



BOGEN'S ENGINEERING STAFF, largest of any sound-equipment maker, designed each circuit stage of the SRB 40 as an individual unit. By concentrating on each stage separately, they can pack more value, more clean performance in less space than is otherwise possible. The separate stages are then carefully, logically arranged in an overall circuit

of proven superiority. This new Bogen concept eliminates wiring clutter, prevents hum and distortion, provides savings which are passed on to you.

Bogen's engineering excellence, crystallized during 25 years of building specialized sound systems for schools, theatres, industrial plants and offices, is yours to enjoy in the new SRB 40. Put it in a cabinet or on your bookshelf (it fits easily). Ask your Bogen dealer to show it to you today.

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CONTROLS: Selector, FM Tuning. AM Tuning. Separate Bass and Treble for each channel (lock for simultaneous control of both). Volume for each channel (correct imbalance, then lock for simultaneous control). Separate On-Off Power. FM On-Off and AFC. AM On-Off. Multiplex.

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BOGEN-PRESTO COMPANY

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CIRCLE 21 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

U.S. PATENT 2,775,309

There are hundreds of United States Patents on loudspeakers. Most of them relate to minor improvements; a few have changed the face of the speaker industry.

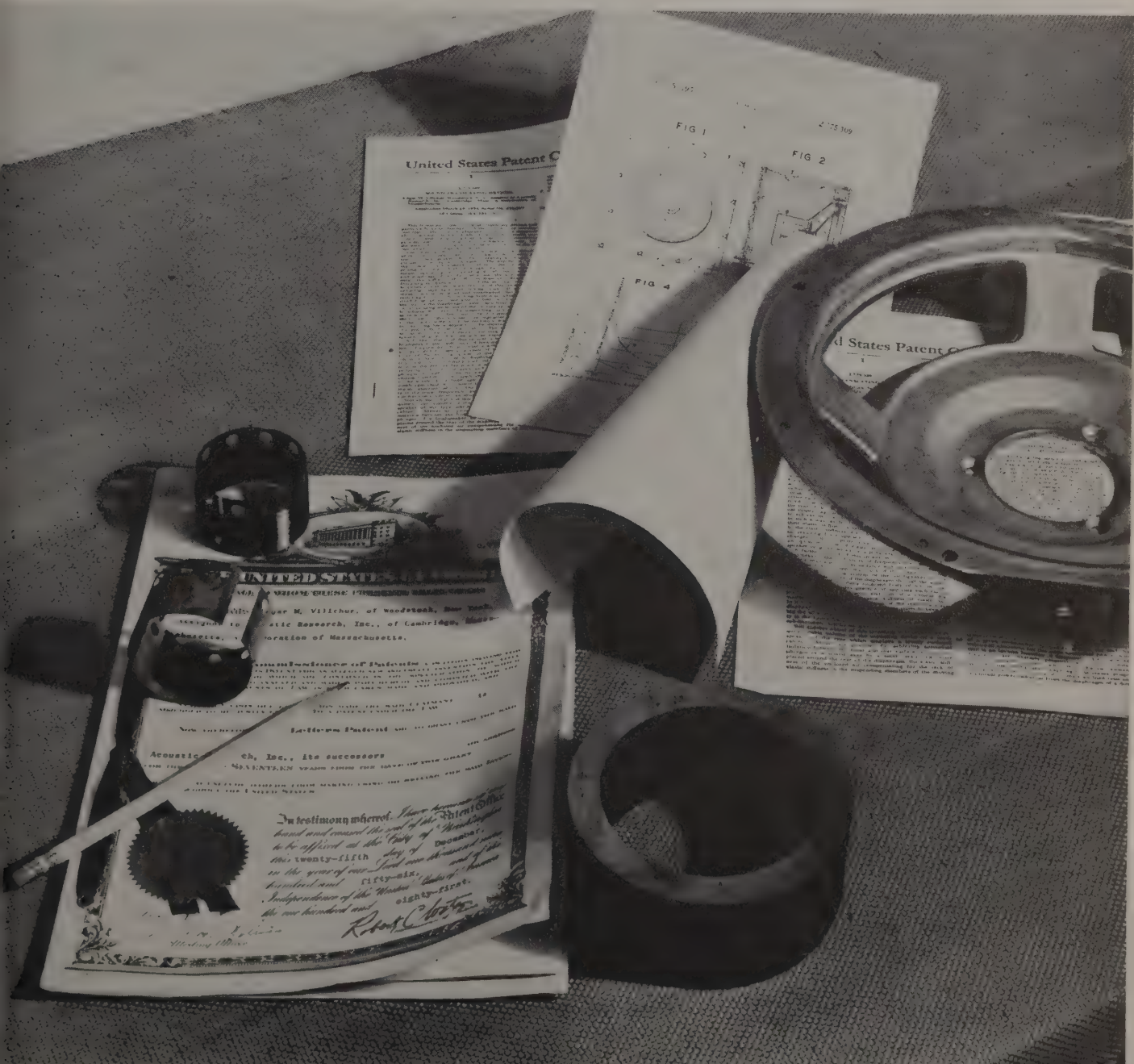
AR's patent on the acoustic suspension speaker system has had far-reaching effects. A very large number of speakers has been produced under the patent by AR and its licensees, and speaker design in general has been given a new direction. In our opinion this patent has proved to be the most significant issued in the speaker field since 1932, when Thuras was awarded a patent on the bass-reflex enclosure.

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Our New Equipment Reports

IF YOU, like us, read your magazines at random instead of in steady sequence from page 1 to the end, you may already have noticed that in this issue the Equipment Reports are no longer in their customary place. They now precede rather than follow the record and tape reviews. The Equipment Reports have also been redesigned. A wider column, a different type face, and a more prominent display of charts and photos all combine to create what we think is a more appetizing and more easily read section.

But there are other changes in this month's Equipment Reports—less immediately apparent but actually more significant—that deserve some comment here. They herald what amounts to a new test policy for HIGH FIDELITY Magazine.

To begin with, equipment for testing is now coming from dealers' shelves rather than directly from manufacturers. This new method of procurement has several advantages. First, we (and you) can be sure that the reports deal with regular production-line equipment. Second, we can choose for testing the equipment most likely to interest you; reports need no longer wait upon a manufacturer's decision to submit equipment to us. Third, and most important, we can speed up our reporting on new equipment; as soon as a new model reaches dealers, it will be available to us for testing.

Another change is the absence of the Manufacturer's Comment from our test reports. Valuable as the reader may sometimes have found these comments, their solicitation took time. Publication of a report was often held up for as long as two or three months while a manufacturer prepared his comments. By omitting them we take another step towards speeding up our reporting on new equipment.

There will be *no change* in HIGH FIDELITY's testing facilities and personnel. Our equipment reports will continue to come from the respected Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, a testing organization entirely independent of this publication. These reports appear in print exactly as submitted by Hirsch-Houck Laboratories and are so signed. Occasionally we may want to report on more new equipment than Hirsch-Houck can handle in one given month. When this happens, the overflow will be tested by HIGH FIDELITY staff members or by other, responsible testing services working under Hirsch-Houck's direction. These reports too will be signed.

The repositioning of our Equipment Reports has entailed the abandonment of the self-contained "Audiocraft" section. But we by no means intend to abandon the features published under the familiar "Audiocraft" designation. Quite the contrary. We shall, as present

plans materialize, give increased space to do-it-yourself articles. The coming months will show that the old "Audiocraft" spirit is very much alive in these pages.

What about rating the equipment we test? This is an omnipresent question. Hardly a day passes without some queries by phone or letter asking our opinion of what is "best" in various categories of equipment. Invariably the request comes from someone who insists that we have the power to divine which equipment is best for him and who confidently believes that we withhold the information out of sheer perversity or cowardice.

We are thinking, for example, of a Vermonter who phoned the other day to ask us which was the "best" of three top-rated tone arms. They were all sturdy units that had been carefully designed and produced. Each of them would give excellent service for a long time. To have singled out one as "best" would have been manifestly unfair to two other fine products. We could only recommend to the man in Vermont that he read our test reports of the three arms, evaluate the special qualities of each, and choose the one offering the most of what *he* considered desirable.

We are thinking too of the reader in Iowa who recently wrote in for tuner ratings. He enclosed a self-addressed postcard on which he had listed the names of several tuners with a series of four check-boxes after each. By putting an "X" in the appropriate box, we were to tell him whether the tuner in question was Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor. Anticipating sinister motives on our part for not answering his request, he sought to get us off the hook. "No signature is necessary" said a line at the bottom of the card.

There are thousands like the Vermonter and the Iowan who want to buy the "best" system of component equipment. They want our help—and we can give it to a point. But we cannot completely obviate their seeming agony of choice, however much they would like us to do so. Oversimplification is misleading and, in a sense, dishonest. Moreover, it serves to rob high fidelity of much of its interest and fun.

We do not score one piece of equipment at 73 and another at 74 on what must necessarily be an arbitrary scale. If one component is better than another by one point, it seems fair to ask "One what?" We cannot answer that. Nor can we say that one item is "best." Best for whom?

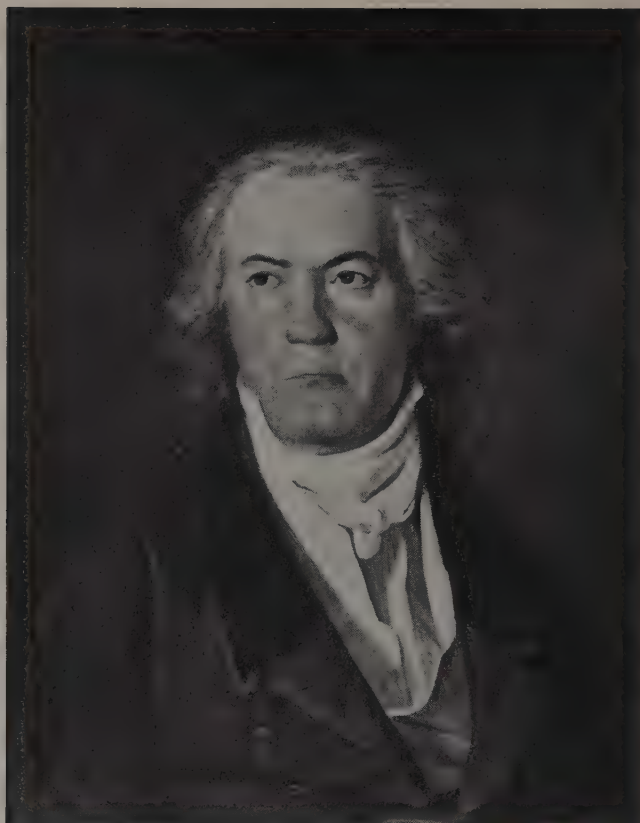
Long before Madison Avenue discovered the smoker who thinks for himself, HIGH FIDELITY discovered the listener who thinks for himself. Our equipment reports are written for him. We believe that they are well worth his attention.

RALPH FREAS

AS THE EDITORS SEE IT



by JOHN M. CONLY



R^eflexions on a Goodly Fellowship

**An act of gratitude, the author calls this, to
someone who knew his own worth and could not, by any
powers, be deflected from his objective—which was us.**

IT WOULD BE PREPOSTEROUS to say that I collect Beethoven, although it has been said. The opposite might be more nearly true, that Beethoven collected me, more than a quarter-century ago, when I was about eighteen.

Still, I do not like the wording, and I am sure Beethoven wouldn't have, either. One does not collect friends, and that is what he is to us who know him well. I say friend, and without either presumption or sentimentality. This was his strongest wish, as is patent in his music, and was in his life. He lived long after living had become a burden to him, and worked when work

must have been an anguish, since he could not even sense what he had completed.

In return we can do no less than our best, which is to pay our good money for the music, learn it, and call upon it when it will serve us. (I have a feeling that Beethoven would have been absolutely delighted with the phonograph, and with the idea that anyone who felt a want for the allegro of Opus 31, No. 1 could satisfy it immediately, whatever the hour of day or night.) His want was to encourage personally, his success has been that he could.

Herein is meant nothing against Bach and Milton, Shakespeare and Wagner, Mozart and Keats. We can benefit much from the high pulpit, the glowing stage, and songs sung from halfway up a rainbow. But down here we live where midnights are just plain black, not magical, and where dawns are just a tinted way of telling us that troubles are about to begin again. People who can pray should do so. Those who cannot must rely on a human fellowship. The best I have found—and there must be countless like me—has been that of Ludwig van Beethoven.

Now, I cannot completely explain this. Neither do I want to foist the feeling on anyone who has no need for it. (Nor would Beethoven, who was working for some particular thousands, among the millions.) Maybe the selective clue is the solitary verbal quotation of any memorable quality that we have from him. He said: "Man, help thyself." He said it once in words, and some hundreds of times in music, in a hundred different ways, never without conviction, never without force behind it that almost cannot be withstood, by the right hearers. There is always in it the jog, or the joke, or the jolt, or the sweet plea, or the trumpeting yell that will get us back on our feet and moving in our right direction, however weary we may have thought ourselves. The man would have made a terrific line sergeant, and maybe that's what he was.

My theory about him—and naturally there is one, after twenty-seven years' acquaintance—must wait upon an excuse I have to make first. This is supposed to be an article about compiling a Beethoven library. My initial aim, to make it a simple narrative, was foiled by the times. It began to emerge as an enumeration of records that I own, or have owned, and that you can't get—because they're out of print—and that you probably wouldn't want anyway, since most of them sound now rather old and rather tinny. There would be no sense in writing an article that would be half exasperating and half tedious. It seems better to balance the past with the prospects, and work a little on the *modus operandi*, that is, the why and the how.

Leonard Bernstein said once that Beethoven's main talent was the ability to put the right note after the note before, a typically clever remark expressing half a truth. That talent was surely there, but it has been just as surely present in, say, Puccini or Richard Rodgers, and we do not think of these men in the same way we do of Beethoven. The fact ignored—or largely so—is that he was one of the last and best philosophers from the era of our greatest philosophers, the Age of Man that fell mostly into the eighteenth century. He was a contemporary of Kant and Goethe, and his thinking went much in parallel with theirs. I think he was more directly eloquent than they, but that was because he had the advantage of making up

his own language as he went along. This brings to mind the man he seems closest akin to in his genius, David Hume (who died when Beethoven was six).

What the two had in common was an almost terrifying ability to examine themselves. Hume, in the *Treatise of Human Nature*, tore the foundations out from under what we thought we knew and understood, a deed later to give us William James's psychology and Einstein's physics. He was by nature a calm man—read Adam Smith's account of his death!—and his investigation was mostly into his own cerebration. But his work was so original that he, too, invented his own language to describe it.

Beethoven's self-examination was in the field of emotion, and his peculiar ability was to feel an excess of passions, then pin them down, so to speak, analyze them, and tell us about them. He was *not* a calm man! The excess of passions probably came naturally, but they were not the passions of a madman; they were just a little stronger than most of ours, which is what gives them their force and utter clarity when strained into musical form. Neither were they altogether personal passions. It is hard for us to sense today, but it had been a dreadful shock for Mankind to find that it was a small and perhaps transitory phenomenon in an illimitable universe. The time of pitiless science had begun, and our half-divine destiny was thrown in doubt. Even the religiously orthodox were shaken. The unshaken man, who could look all doubts in their shadowy faces, with an almost savage pride in his humanity, became a treasure to his kind. Beethoven was, and he knew he was to be. This was not arrogance, but merely an acknowledgment of the fact and a duty.

It is an artist's fate to be divided up. My primary division of Beethoven is into two parts: works in which he intended important content, and which were written for listeners, and works which were purely musical, and which were intended perhaps mainly for performers, including himself. There are two other schemes of division. One is the Three Styles, or Three Periods, which is real enough but has been talked about too much. The other is the three approaches. (There are obviously cross-connections among these, but they hold up well.) To wit: first, the piano was his laboratory, where he experimented; we know he could not write the Ninth Symphony (which had been commissioned) until after he had written the *Hammerklavier* Sonata (which no one wanted), because he tried. Second, his autobiographical expression is mostly in the string quartets. Third, his final and considered declarations, exhortative and sermonic, came forth mostly in the large-scale works—the symphonies, the concertos, the two Masses; the solitary opera and its overtures; the concert overtures, and such allusive music as the incidental accompaniment to Goethe's *Egmont*, which he enjoyed writing so much



that he refused payment for it. This was a quixotic gesture he certainly couldn't afford, but that is the kind of man he was. He thought of us as something valorous, good, and noble. Maybe some of us are.

The essential Beethoven literature I consider to be: the symphonies from Three to Nine, excepting none; the piano concertos from Three to Five; the Violin Concerto; *Fidelio* and its overtures (4); the *Missa Solemnis*; the string quartets from Opus 59, No. 1—the First *Rasumovsky*—to Opus 135 (wherein is one of the loveliest, manliest farewells to life since Socrates drank his hemlock); and a scattering of piano sonatas. Among early piano works, I think only Opus 10, No. 3 gets a rating, by virtue of its slow movement, an anachronistic vision. Next we get to Opus 28, called “Pastorale” by someone who heard in it something I don't, but a gripping piece of continuing strong whimsy nonetheless, with a wonderful march theme slowed down to an andante in the middle. Then comes the miraculous triad called Opus 31, which I think is the best piano writing Beethoven ever turned out. Apparently he was living lonely at the time, and had been reading Shakespeare, which can have a surprising effect on anyone. It did on him, anyway, because the music comes forth as a sort of enchanted journey, in all sorts of paces, through a boundless world of imagination. (There is a lot more and better moonlight, incidentally, in 31, No. 2 than there is in the so-called *Moonlight*, which always has struck me as uncharacteristic and rather a bore.) A further brave sunrise gallop is given us in the *Waldstein*, which has always sorrowed me a little after the lofting effect of listening, since there is in it so patently the germ of a symphony that never got written. The *Appassionata*, a little later, did germinate, into the Fifth Symphony. Then there are the quiet sonatas—I say quiet in a psychological sense—Opera 109, 110, and 111.

The last is the greatest, and illustrates a paradox. The man we deem our finest warrior sought all his later life for an avenue to resignation, and calm. It was rather like Sir Lancelot entering a monastery, as Malory says he did. Opus 111 is a record of the search, or the exploration. All courage and high attention are still there, but together with them is an honest longing for oblivion and rest. Visions of these illuminate the latter movement of the sonata, and they are tempting visions.

I have got here rather deeper than I expected to into the piano sonatas, but that is no bad thing. They yield the most continuous personal history of the man we are after. He was a fair violinist and a better violist, but his workbench was the one afront the keyboard.

My own first acquaintance with Beethoven was by way of the *Eroica*. Through an odd happenstance, it was also by way of the first symphony concert I went into on my own initiative. The Rochester Philharmonic played it (I was at college in Rochester). I don't remem-

ber what else they played. In fact, I don't remember anything else at all that occurred that day; it was as if I had discovered a new world. I am all in favor of discovering Beethoven through the *Eroica*. The Fifth is not bad, but it is harder to get to, being a little more labored. The Seventh does not make its impression at first hearing. The Ninth is all right, except that hardly anyone plays the first movement properly, which puts all the burden of conviction on the Handelian finale, and gives a very wrong concept of what the work is about and what its composer was about. After the *Eroica*, my choice of introductory works would be the *Emperor* Concerto. Even the worst performers cannot easily botch the *Emperor*.

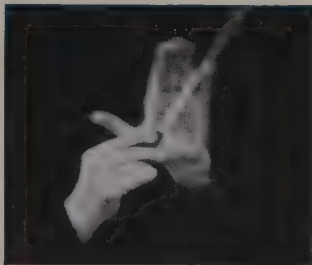
The history of my delving into recorded Beethoven would not be a very interesting one, for reasons given above. There were records that could be borrowed at the university's students' club and at the art gallery. They weren't very good but they were good enough. In the orchestral vein they seemed to feature, mostly, Albert Coates and an organization called, with admirable brevity, Sym. Orch. There was also one Weingartner (the Fifth Symphony) and a Hamilton Harty (the Fourth). Both of these were on thick old Columbia discs that resembled nothing so much as Prussian-blue flapjacks. Despite their thickness, though, they warped, so that it was at least a year before I knew how the Fourth Symphony started. Each collection contained but one piano concerto, the *Emperor*, performed by Wilhelm Backhaus and an orchestra under Sir Landon Ronald. The art gallery, however, had a very fair assortment of the quartets, with the Lener Quartet playing. Accordingly I was able to immerse myself with delight in the *Rasumovskys* and with awe in Opera 130 to 135. Parenthetically I shall point out that, with this glorious, if screechy, trove at my disposal, I saved enough of my summer earnings, my junior year, to buy a phonograph. It was a portable, and the head weighed about a pound, but I rigged a sort of swinging boom, with two corset whalebones (I do *not* recall where I got those) and a rubber band, that took some of the frictive weight off the records. I was a man of vigorous conscience in those days, which may have come of listening to too much Beethoven.

My first actual purchase of a classical album, for the record, was of course an *Eroica*, the one then brand-new by Mengelberg and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony. There were to be many more purchases but most of them cannot have been memorable performances, because I can't remember them. Except that, in those days, *any* new Beethoven album was memorable, because there were so few. The bulk of the Weingartner symphonies and the Schnabel piano works did not arrive over here until about the time I finished school and made my exit into the world of the Depression. In a moment of idiotic

Continued on page 108

by PETER J. PIRIE

TOSCANINI and FURTWÄNGLER



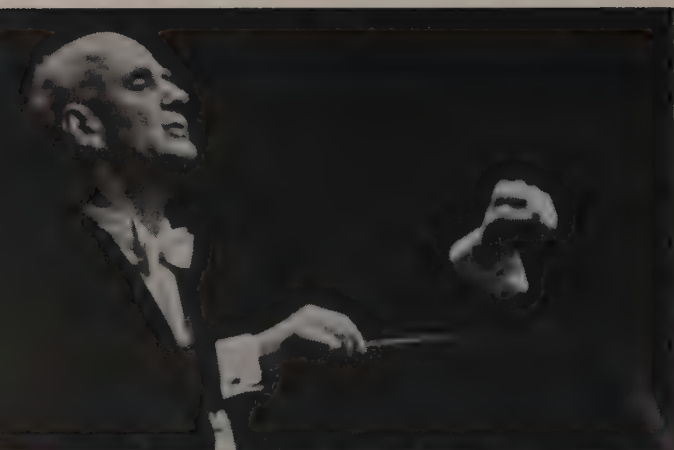
AN EMPIRE DIVIDED

For better or worse, probably the latter, avid listeners have split into two factions on the matter of interpreting the Beethoven symphonic canon. Mr. Pirie manages to take both sides without backing away from a single issue.

IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT to imagine a sharper polarity in the art of interpretation than that afforded by the differing views of Toscanini and Furtwängler on the reading of Beethoven's orchestral music. There is no doubt that today the *Zeitgeist* favors Toscanini; everyone criticizes Furtwängler, but any criticism of Toscanini savors of blasphemy. Yet it will be my thesis that the latter's view of Beethoven is not the only possible one, and may even be considered incomplete; and that incompleteness of comprehension, even if covered by the sheer dynamic of genius, leaves a dangerous legacy for those of lesser talent, remains a fault in spite of genius, and may perpetuate a false impression of the composer. And although I believe that Furtwängler (because he is an antithesis and not a balanced corrective to the conducting style of Toscanini) cannot be unconditionally endorsed, I maintain that he is nearer to the true tradition of Beethoven conducting, and possibly to Beethoven's original conception, than is the Italian maestro.

I have suggested that Toscanini's view of Beethoven is incomplete. We are reminded of Tovey's dictum:

"Beethoven is a complete artist. If the term is rightly understood, he is one of the completest that ever lived." Living over the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Beethoven stands poised at the juncture of the classical and romantic styles, and forms a bridge between them. He is the supreme sonata-form composer, and his work the climax of the sonata style; yet in that very climax are elements foreign to the music of the no less perfect Mozart. Those elements have much in common with the romantic style, without ever belonging wholly to it: the expressive elements (Beethoven's own term) are invariably turned to account as points of form; or points of form are marvelously turned to expressive purposes; it is impossible to say which. Form never exists for its own sake, as in classical music, and expression never overruns form, as in much romantic music; the *équilibre* is perfect. Similarly, we here meet the classical key structure, which is the very soul of the sonata style, at its highest point. Beethoven used it to serve structures that were larger than any that had been conceived up to his day, and impart to them an extra dimension of



Furtwängler: stands squarely in the Wagner tradition.

time. His is the greatest and almost the last confirmation of the old principles of tonality.

Thus technique; we should now consider the "expressive elements." The heavy-browed Beethoven of legend, hurling his thunderbolts, is but half the truth. There is a story that relates how, when one of the innumerable good women who clustered round Beethoven was half-demented with grief at the loss of her child, the master came discreetly and in silence to play for her until her health and reason were restored. (He has done the same, since then, for innumerable men and women he could never know.) This is the Beethoven of the Fourth Symphony, the Violin Concerto, the Fourth Piano Concerto, the Sonata in F sharp, Op. 78. This is the delicate and sensitive tone poet, tender and gentle. It is when we see how gentle and tender his music can be that we realize how strong is its strength. Only the very strong can be truly gentle, and strength without its foil of gentleness is mere violence, and has no place in art. For this reason any interpretation of Beethoven's music that strives to raise its dramatic strength to the highest power, while pushing the tenderness and delicate imagination into the background, is incomplete.

We must also consider the great scherzos and the Eighth Symphony. In these we have every aspect of humor—that divine attribute, the most human of the emotions; if a mental patient can be made to laugh, laugh with the comic and heartfelt inconsequence of the humanly ridiculous, then the battle for his sanity is won. A great gale of laughter bursts from the music of Beethoven like the wind of April, bringing with it health. It makes the task of those who would prove him fundamentally unbalanced extremely difficult. He was a whole man, as well as a complete artist; no normal human emotion is missing from his music, and it is there in just the balance and measure that informs every aspect of his art.

It is said that if Beethoven missed a performance of one of his works, the one question he always asked about it was "What were the tempos like?" For information on

what he expected from a good performance it may well be safer to refer to his remarks as they have come down to us, and his practice, than to his metronome marks. The latter are notoriously controversial; they indicate a very fast speed indeed, in the majority of cases, and it is well known that Beethoven altered those of the Ninth Symphony towards the end of his life, halving the speeds. Schnabel's attempt to play the first movement of the *Hammerklavier* Sonata at Beethoven's metronome mark merely indicates that it is impossible to do so; the result is sufficient proof of the inaccuracy of this marking. And of all conductors, it is Toscanini who most nearly accords with Beethoven's metronome marks.

Beethoven's ideas on the subject are best given in his own words: "Though the poet carries on his monologue or dialogue in a progressively marked rhythm, yet the declaimer, for the most accurate elucidation of the sense, must make caesuras and pauses in places where the poet could not venture on any interpunctuation. To this extent, then, is the style of declaiming applicable to music. . . ." Further, Anton Schindler, Beethoven's friend and biographer, tells us of his practice that he "played without constraint as to the rate of the time. He adopted a tempo rubato in the proper sense of the term, according as the subject and situation might demand, without the slightest approach to caricature. Beethoven's playing was the most distinct and intelligible declamation. . . ." This is clear enough, even if we cannot be quite sure what Beethoven meant by "progressively marked rhythm," and it confirms the practice, within their individual styles, of Furtwängler, Klemperer, Jochum, and Von Karajan. But it does not confirm that of Toscanini; Beethoven's observations and practice seem to indicate not only a more flexible tempo, but a slower one, than that of the metronome marks.

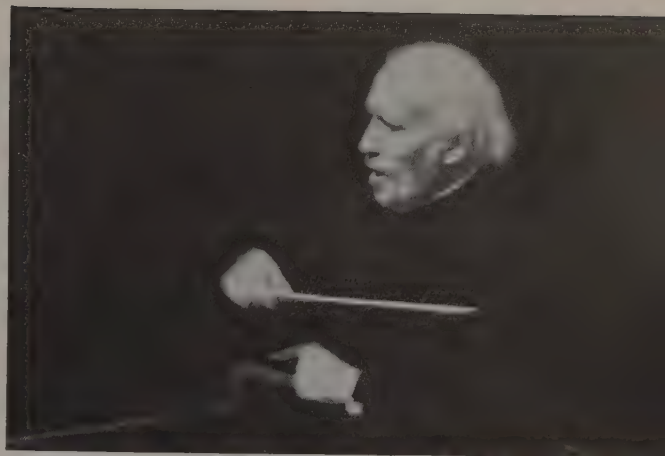
Furtwängler stands squarely in the Wagner tradition. His incomparable readings of *The Ring* are a clinching proof of how near he is to this, the main stream of German conducting. How near that tradition may be to a true Beethoven style may be gauged by Wagner's remarks in his book *On Conducting* where in terms that suggest familiarity with Beethoven's words quoted above he lays down the principle "for Beethoven and all Romantic music" of "perpetual modification of tempo." One may say, then, that the tradition of Beethoven conducting in Germany and Austria favors the "rhetorical" style: not the fast, steady tempo one would naturally adopt in a Mozart or Haydn allegro, but one that adapts itself to the inherent drama of the music; not a sentimental tempo rubato, but a dramatic emphasis declamatory in style. Since Beethoven was not, as we have seen, wholly a romantic composer, the result is that conductors in the Wagner tradition tend to render his scores too massive and sluggish of tempo. Nevertheless, I feel the root of the matter can be found in this tradition, whatever its occasional excesses.

We might inquire if Toscanini also belongs to a tradi-

tion. There are few Italian symphonic conductors, and the two we might name, De Sabata and the late Guido Cantelli, belong to a later generation and owe not a little to Toscanini's pioneering. The overwhelming Italian tradition is operatic, and it is from this tradition that Toscanini's methods spring. He had, of course, his own individuality, but it was mainly Verdi (all Verdi, except perhaps *Otello* and *Falstaff*) that went to the molding of his musical thought. His Beethoven readings are never less than beautifully organized, and from within; somewhere inside those clear, tawny textures that he always obtained in Beethoven the unifying principle works outward to all the surface detail. With Furtwängler the reading is imposed from outside. This accounts, in part, for the atmosphere of furious excitement Toscanini engendered; he takes the smallest rhythmic unit as his basis and relates the whole to it. Furtwängler, and the German school with him, take the intellectual conception of the whole as a starting point, and relate every detail to it. With Furtwängler a symphony unfolds; with Toscanini it generates, even at times explodes. Furtwängler's was an intellectual concept, Toscanini's, basically, a physical one.

Toscanini was never at his best in Beethoven's slow movements. His reading of that of the Ninth Symphony is superficial compared with his performance of the first movement. The reason is that the Beethoven-type adagio does not occur in Verdi. The Beethoven slow movement is a perfect union of intellectual and emotional factors; we call the result spiritual, and some sort of metaphysical concept is inevitable in considering the Beethoven adagio. It is a strictly German concept, at any rate in its translation into this type of very slow "generating" slow movement. The Italian slow tempo is nearer to andante than adagio, it is broadly lyrical, not *tief*; it is fatal to let an Italian melody drag. The typical Beethoven slow movement generates an exceedingly slow pulse, hardly a body rhythm, but noticeable as an unfolding. The nearest thing in Verdi to this kind of thing is the tenor aria "*Dio mi potevi scagliar*" from *Otello* (was this piece the reason for the accusations of German influence?). It is for this reason that I excluded *Otello* and *Falstaff* from my account of Verdi's influence on Toscanini; he gave incomparable performances of these two exquisite scores, but they have stylistic differences from the rest of Verdi. In the same way, there is a very German use of modulation to heighten drama, or give an impression of "things moving in the deeps" that is seldom found in Italian music; a very cogent instance occurs half way through the second movement of Schubert's *Unfinished* Symphony.

These things can be seen in the second half of the first movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Here are three factors: the physical impact of the fortissimo return of the hollow fifth opening at the onset of the reprise; the psychological drama of the subsequent key waverings of the second subject, a dramatic stroke of



Toscanini: his musical thought was molded by Verdi.

great subtlety which heightens the sense of tragedy and renders the great coda necessary; and the drama of that coda itself. Let us see how Toscanini and Furtwängler play these crucial passages. Toscanini takes the storm of the reprise for all it is worth, and more, and his coda is so tremendous that it leaves you flattened. They are both emotional points. But his basic tempo, which is very fast, and which he maintains unaltered, precludes playing the second subject material in the exposition at the speed it cries out for; and when he comes to the reprise the effect of the key wavering is lost. He does not adopt a slower speed for the whole, or relax for the second subject. Furtwängler makes every point, with power, throughout the movement, and above all from the opening of the reprise to the end. He has been criticized both for his deliberate basic tempo and his elastic departures from it for rhetorical purposes. I submit that he was amply justified. Indeed, his reading of the Ninth Symphony is perhaps his best Beethoven performance; he reveals *in combination* the dramatic sense, emotional power, and intellectual grasp necessary in order to perform this symphony above all others.

Toscanini's training was in the Italian operatic repertoire, and it remained his especial affection all his life. Now the basis of this style, *Otello* and *Falstaff* again excepted, is swift dramatic movement of a specifically theatrical kind; lyrical passages are an outpouring of extrovert melody, the basic tempo of which is often a moderate andante, occasionally a slow allegro, rarely a true adagio. The tunes sing, but they move at a certain pace, and must be made to do so. The dramatic climax is swift and brassy; the clanging of high-pitched brass is its most typical sound. Choral writing tends to be square, and to move to a swinging rhythm. In fact, Toscanini's *Missa Solemnis*—one of his best, if not the best, of his Beethoven recordings—must be seen in relation to his performance of Verdi's *Requiem*. The tremendous dramatic force, rhythmic vitality, and ferocious aspiration of the former performance are derived from a temperament attuned to the

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It All Began in BONN...

Mr. Landon, founder of the Haydn Society but a good Beethovenian—as would seem natural—went to the composer's birthplace for some original research, and found out why Beethoven migrated to Vienna. Which also, from the telling, sounds very natural indeed.

by H. C. Robbins Landon

OF ALL GREAT COMPOSERS, surely Beethoven has been the most maligned by well-meaning biographers. Most innocent music listeners are brought up on the idea of a growling, surly hulk of a man, the jagged corners of his mouth pulled down in angry defiance, his fist raised, even on his deathbed, against the world. For the last two

decades of his life this portrait of the lonely genius, cut off by the terrible affliction of deafness from all normal contacts with his fellow men, may be a true enough representation. But the young man who lived in the provincial city of Bonn for his first twenty-two years was a different character entirely.

In search of this young Beethoven we recently traveled to his birthplace. Bonn of today has little in common with the Bonn of the composer's day: the population has

swollen from slightly over 10,000 in 1790 to 145,000, and the town is still licking the wounds inflicted by bomb damage. The traffic seethes across the squares and over the Rhine bridges, day and night, and the German *Wirtschaftswunder* has sprouted gigantic office buildings on the mossy ruins. It has also produced, to replace the opera house that was totally destroyed, a huge *Beethovenhalle*, built at a cost of 9,000,000 DM (\$2,250,000) and a miracle of modern ugliness. There we went recently to hear *Fidelio*, not a bad performance, but the atmosphere was more that of an operating room than an opera house: the ceiling, with its cluster of inverted egg containers, swoops down on the stage, curving back sound which is dry, clinical, and efficient. In the intermission, the audience walked slowly up and down, the men smoking cigars, their wives moving sedately beside them. We felt ourselves ages away from Beethoven.

It seemed a most discouraging idea to try to find any of the atmosphere in which the young composer grew up; and yet, by some curious quirk of fate, the bombs spared the mecca of all Beethoven lovers: the *Geburtshaus*, a modest three-storied house in the Bonngasse, where, on December 17, 1770, Beethoven was born. His parents owned five rooms in the back section of the building, and they had their own entrance from a pleasant courtyard. The room on the top floor, where Ludwig was born, is kept bare except for a bust and a small wreath. The house itself is now a museum, with some of the best Beethoven portraits, manuscripts, and the pathetic collection of hearing aids with which the composer sought to stave off his growing deafness. On the Sunday morning when we visited it, not even the ill-mannered custodian who opened the door could spoil the pleasant cleanliness of the place. Even if the brightly colored paint (orange-yellow with green shutters) is not entirely original, the house is assuredly a nice one in which to have been born.

The first thing that struck us was the early portraits. Far from being the "uncouth, pock-marked" peasant of popular legend, Beethoven was an extremely attractive young man. His forebears, too, were anything but peasants. His grandfather, Ludwig van Beethoven, was *Capellmeister* to the Elector Clemens August, one of the most coveted musical positions in the Rhineland. He seems also to have run a small wine export business, and to have been highly respected by court and colleagues alike. His third child, Johann van Beethoven, was born about 1740 (no exact birth date can be located), and it was soon observed that, like his father, he was musical: at about the age of twelve, the Elector accepted him into the *Hofcapelle*, where he sang soprano and alto, and

after his voice changed, tenor; he could also play the violin capably. In 1767 he married Maria Magdalena Keverich, the twenty-one-year-old daughter of a well-situated family. Johann's character has been generally painted in the darkest colors. Recent biographers have attempted to whitewash him, but it is rather difficult to overlook the Elector Maximilian Franz's remark upon Johann's death in 1792 that "the alcohol tax has suffered a loss in . . . Beethoven's death." Biographers have described Ludwig's mother as a serving girl, which is quite ridiculous; on the contrary, recent research into the Keverich family has shown that it was she, and not Johann van Beethoven, who "married down." We know very little of the marriage, and very little of Maria Magdalena's character, except that she was well educated and well loved by her family and friends. There is no evidence at all that she suffered continually under the drunken bestiality of her husband (as many biographers relate); on the contrary, the family *Feste* seem to have been characterized by the happy spirit that marks the carnival festivities of present-day Cologne, in which almost everyone drinks too much wine without necessarily causing undue harm.

The Beethovens had seven children, of whom all except three died in infancy; Ludwig was the second child, and was followed by two brothers, both of whom lived. There are curious tales of Ludwig's childhood. It is reported that he "was often dirty." A friend of the family said to him; "Why do you look so dirty? You ought to keep yourself more properly," whereupon Beethoven answered: "What does it matter? When I'm grown up [*ein Herr werde*] no one will notice it any more." The same source reports Beethoven, lying in his bedroom one morning with his face in his cupped hands, staring into space. "What's up, Ludwig?" No answer. "Bad weather on your horizon today, Ludwig?" No answer. Later, when questioned if all this meant that "no answer is also an answer," Beethoven said: "Oh no, it's not that; excuse me; I was so preoccupied by beautiful, subtle thoughts that I simply couldn't let myself be disturbed."

Beethoven's extraordinary musicality seems to have shown itself by the time he was six or seven. We do not have the exact records which tell us how this musicality manifested itself, nor do we know the pedagogical methods which father Johann employed, but the sources attest to the father's exceptional severity; the little Ludwig "stood at the piano on a little stool and the tears rolled down his cheeks." There seems no doubt that Johann van Beethoven entertained the idea of raising another *Wunderkind* à la Mozart. On March



The young Beethoven.



The Geburtshaus: now a museum, surely a pleasant place to have been born.

26, 1778, he “produced” Ludwig at a concert in Cologne; the program gives Ludwig’s age as six (he was nearly eight), and this attempt to make his son younger than he actually was persisted in many of Johann’s dealings: it does not seem likely, as certain writers have maintained, that Johann actually believed Ludwig to have been younger than he was.

Johann was clever enough to see that he could not go on teaching Ludwig such things as counterpoint, figured bass, and the like. Various other teachers were summoned, including a member of a group of strolling players, who was lodging at the Beethoven’s. It was during the years 1779 and 1780 that we read the appalling story of Johann and his lodger, drinking wine in the *Gasthaus* until nearly midnight, then coming home, hauling the weeping little Ludwig out of bed and making him practice the piano till the early morning hours. He also studied organ with a frater of the local Franciscan monastery, and later played the great organ of the *Minoritenkirche*, the keyboard of which is preserved in the Beethoven Museum in Bonn. His most talented teacher, however, was Christian Gottlob Neeffe, the organist in the Elector’s *Capelle* and a composer widely respected in his time.

Neeffe introduced Beethoven, who must have been ten or eleven, to the works of J. S. Bach. In a musical magazine of 1783, we read that Ludwig “plays the piano very well and with strength, reads at sight very fluently, and to sum up everything in a sentence: he plays almost the whole of Sebastian Bach’s *Wohltemperirte Clavier*. . . . This young genius [i.e., Beethoven] needs support so

that he can travel. He would certainly become a second Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart if he were to continue as he has begun. . . .”

In this year, Beethoven’s first two works were published: a Lied, and three piano sonatas, dedicated to the Elector Maximilian Friedrich, both published by Bossler in Speyer. A year later, in 1784, Neeffe and Johann van Beethoven attempted to secure Ludwig a position as assistant organist; the Elector Maximilian Friedrich agreed, but increased the young Beethoven’s salary only by a pittance.

One and one-half months after Beethoven had been accepted as *Hofmusiker* in the electoral chapel band, the Elector Maximilian Friedrich died, to be succeeded by Maximilian Franz, son of the Austrian Empress Maria Theresa and young-

est brother of the then ruling Emperor, Joseph II. Maximilian Franz, with his soft, feminine features and his cold eyes, mingled most curiously the coolly efficient with the natural artistic gifts of the Hapsburgs. It was he who encouraged Beethoven to undertake both his trips to Vienna, but it was also he who was primarily responsible for the young composer’s never returning to Bonn.

In 1787, Beethoven, supported by several of his friends in Bonn—he had already won the hearts of some of the nobility—undertook a trip to Vienna, where he played for Mozart. Exactly what happened at this famous meeting between Beethoven and Mozart is unclear; but contemporary sources relate that Mozart, after hearing the young man improvise, said, “Pay attention to him! One day he will make the world sit up and take notice.” So little is known about the first Viennese sojourn that we are not even sure why Beethoven made it: perhaps to gain some kind of a position with the Court, or with one of the famous Austrian aristocratic houses. At any rate, nothing came of the plans, and Beethoven returned to Bonn, just in time to see his beloved mother die. He wrote in a letter to a friend in Augsburg (September 15, 1787), “fate here in Bonn is not favorable to me.”

It is generally believed that Beethoven took over the motherless household. The family was near financial ruin, and had to appeal to the Elector for a loan; Beethoven gave piano lessons, took up service with the Elector again, and continued composition in various forms. But he, and all his friends, agreed that he must have a new teacher, who could give him the instruction

which his brilliant mind required. The opportunity presented itself in the year 1790: Haydn, accompanied by the impresario Johann Peter Salomon (who, incidentally, was born in Bonn), arrived in Bonn shortly before Christmas. On Sunday, December 26, Haydn attended the *Hofcapelle*, where he heard, to his surprise and pleasure, one of his own Masses. Afterwards, he was summoned to go to the Oratorium (where the orchestra had assembled), and there he was greeted by no less than the Elector Maximilian Franz himself, who introduced Haydn to the orchestra.

When Haydn returned from London, in the summer of 1792, the orchestra gave him a reception at the *Redoute*, or summer castle, at Bad Godesberg, a few miles up the river. Here, Beethoven was presented to him, and showed him one of his new cantatas (either the *Cantata on the Death of Joseph II* or the *Cantata on the Installation of Leopold II as Emperor*, probably the former). Haydn was impressed, and offered to teach the young Beethoven if he accompanied him to Vienna. Haydn went on to Frankfurt to the coronation of Leopold II, and Beethoven left for Vienna the following October. There is preserved a little *Stammbuch* in which all his Bonn friends wrote him farewell messages. That they believed Beethoven was a genius, and that they had immense and unshakable faith in his ability, is seen in a short notice written by Count Waldstein on October 29, 1792:

You are now traveling to Vienna in fulfillment of your innermost dream. Mozart's genius still mourns and weeps for the death of her darling. She found respite at the indefatigable Hayden [*sic*], but no refuge; through him, she wishes once more to be reunited with someone. By steady labor you shall receive: *Mozart's spirit through Hayden's hand*.

Beethoven arrived in Vienna in the final months of the year 1792. He began to study counterpoint and composition with Haydn, who was busy with large numbers of commissions for a new English trip. Haydn taught him rather hastily, forgetting to mark all the parallel fifths and octaves in Beethoven's counterpoint exercises, and Beethoven, discovering this, went to another teacher, the famous contrapuntalist Albrechtsberger, with whom he studied secretly, so as not to offend Haydn.

In fact, the relationship was a lot warmer than has hitherto been imagined. The following letter from Haydn to the Elector is self-explanatory; curiously enough, this document was till recently practically unknown in English, although it was discovered in Vienna nearly twenty-five years ago:



Maximilian Franz, Elector of Cologne.

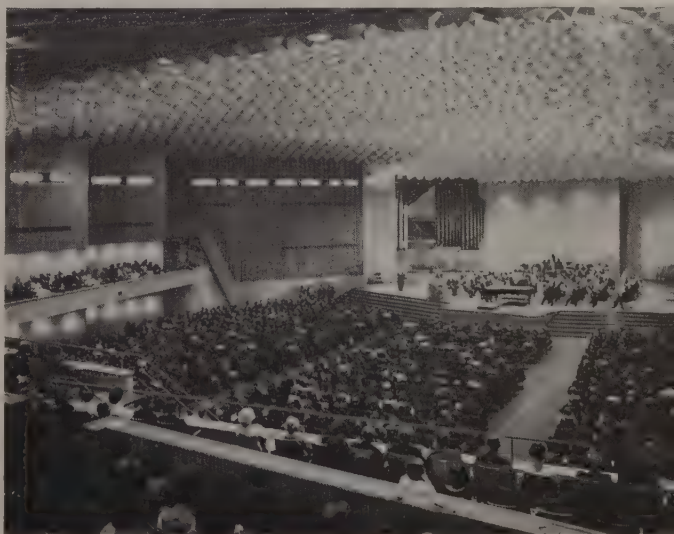
[HAYDN TO MAXIMILIAN FRANZ, The Elector of Cologne, Bonn. Written in German. Only signature & title in Haydn's own hand. Serene Electoral Highness!]

I humbly take the liberty of sending Your Serene Electoral Highness some musical works, viz., a Quintet, an eight-part Parthie, an oboe Concerto, Variations for the fortepiano, and a Fugue, compositions of my dear pupil Beethoven, with whose care I have been graciously entrusted. I flatter myself that these pieces, which I may recommend as evidence of his assiduity over and above his actual studies, may be graciously accepted by Your Serene Electoral Highness. Connoisseurs and nonconnoisseurs must candidly admit, from these present pieces, that Beethoven will in

time fill the position of one of Europe's greatest composers, and I shall be proud to be able to speak of myself as his teacher; I only wish that he might remain with me a little while longer.

While we are on the subject of Beethoven, Your Serene Electoral Highness will perhaps permit me to say a few words concerning his financial status. 100# were allotted to him during the past year. Your Serene Electoral Highness is no doubt yourself convinced that this sum was insufficient, and not even enough to live from; undoubtedly Your Highness also had his own reasons for choosing to send him into the great world with such a paltry sum. Under these circumstances, and to prevent him from falling into the hand of usurers, I have in part gone bail for him and in part lent him money myself, with the result that he owes me 500 fl., of which not a Kreutzer was spent unnecessarily; which sum I would ask you to send to him here. And since the interest on borrowed money grows continually, and is very tedious for an artist like Beethoven anyway, I think that if Your Serene Electoral Highness were to send him 1,000 fl. for the coming year, Your Highness would earn his eternal gratitude, and at the same time relieve him of all his distress: for the teachers which are absolutely essential for him, and the display which is necessary if he is to gain admission into numerous

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The new Beethovenhalle—very expensive and very ugly.

The Beethoven Symphonies in Stereo

by Robert C. Marsh

IT REQUIRED no seventh sense to predict that the early years of stereo would give prominence to two-channel editions of such fundamental repertory as the Beethoven symphonies. What was uncertain was the actual volume of these releases and their quality as compared with the excellent monophonic sets already available.

Both doubts have now been resolved. This compilation, which views the scene from the perspective of early 1960, includes no fewer than three stereo editions for any Beethoven symphony and more than a dozen for the dominant Fifth. Moreover, the quality of these recordings is surprisingly high. The truly atrocious performances, the engineering failures of irritating magnitude appear rewardingly far apart.

Held to the standard of the best of the monophonic sets, the stereo discs compare favorably in sonics but sometimes fail to dominate musically. The finest performances in the monophonic listings—representing as they do the accumulated successes of many seasons of recording—have not in any sense been consigned to obsolescence. This is particularly true of some of the recent Klemperer editions, where the monophonic engineering is excellent and the stereo represents a relatively early use of the two-channel technique. It is wisest to hear these things in the form in which they are best, even if it means abandoning stereo.

Every discography involves certain compromises, and those operating here ought to be made clear. The listings that follow are an examination of the Beethoven Nine as they are represented in the current stereo catalogue, with secondary consideration given to the monophonic alternates of these stereo editions (when such duplicates exist) and to monophonic recordings of particular merit that remain in print. What I have not attempted at this time is a historical survey of recordings of the Beethoven symphonies, and almost no mention is made of the most remarkable of the editions now unavailable though they include such important matters as all the Beethoven recordings of the late Wilhelm Furtwängler.

Earlier Beethoven discographies in this magazine by C. G. Burke (Spring 1952; Mar.-Apr., May-June, July-Aug. 1953; Jan. 1957) contain his appraisals of many of these historic releases, as well as of some monophonic sets that are still being pressed. In the majority of instances I am in sufficient agreement with Mr. Burke's conclusions to have no hesitation about permitting his judgments to stand for mine. The material considered

here, therefore, will be primarily that which has appeared since Mr. Burke's discography of January 1957.

Preparing a discography subjects one to the temptation of selecting "the best" version of every work considered. Sometimes this is possible. Limited representation in the catalogue, engineering failures, or the demand for a particular stylistic flair can create a situation in which one particular edition of a score is plainly superior to all its rivals. But recordings of the Beethoven symphonies rarely make possible such conclusive choices.

What happens in circumstances of abundant riches is that the discographer becomes not merely a critic but an interpreter and selects the performance that best represents "the way I would play it." This is a venial sin—every listener is apt to commit it to some degree—but it limits the critic's usefulness to those whose musical preferences are similar to his own.

Taking the position of Artur Schnabel that the greatest works of Beethoven are "inexhaustible" music that remains "always better than it could be played," I have tried here to indicate all performances that seem to present a persuasive and consistent development of a point of view reconcilable with the score Beethoven left us. Every Beethoven symphony presents a wider range of content than may be included in any single approach to its realization. This is why anyone who is genuinely devoted to Beethoven ought to own the symphonies in multiple editions, carefully selected to exhibit the various aspects of these scores. (For this reason, the loss of the Furtwängler recordings, mentioned earlier, is a particularly grave deprivation, since that conductor's outlook was unique.)

In preparing these comments I have tried to find performances that are musically authoritative and engineered in a manner that makes successful use of stereophonic technique. The first performance in each listing represents my choice under those criteria, but undoubtedly there is a subjective element in these ratings that cannot be eliminated. I am required to listen to a lot of Beethoven during the course of a year, and I naturally respond to those performances which depart from the dreary orthodoxy of a "standard reading" to achieve something fresh and revealing. I may not agree with every departure from tradition that I hear but I enjoy the mental exercise of making an evaluation of it. I hope that many of those who read this discography will share my own sense of adventure.

Symphony No. 1, in C, Op. 21 (6 stereo versions)

Some think that the Beethoven First, completed in 1800, belongs among the symphonic works of the expiring eighteenth century. Actually, its ties to Mozart and Haydn are considerably less important than its evidence of the maturing individuality of its thirty-year-old composer. Among harmony teachers its most celebrated innovation is its opening chord (in technical terms a secondary dominant) that starts us off in F rather than in the announced key. It yields one of the grandest effects in Beethoven, by which the composer seems to open the curtain and for three bars heightens our anticipation of what is coming, until the arrival of the proper dominant (that of C) sets us on our way. This device was actually not new (C.P.E. Bach had used it repeatedly), but this is its first appearance in a symphonic work of enduring substance.

To hear the symphony well you must have a chance to hear those chords balanced between the strings and wind instruments, in the manner of the Klemperer monophonic version. Unfortunately, in stereo the Klemperer suffers from a loss of sonic focus as well as a diminution of high frequencies. Stereo is not worth that sort of sacrifice, and the Klemperer should be regarded as a monophonic set of exceptional worth.

Happily, Keilberth provides a stereo version in which the opening passage is faultlessly recorded, and the entire performance is marked by a feeling for rhythmic force and large outlines that makes this work sound like a convincing precursor of the *Eroica*, Fifth, and Seventh. It is a very fine edition, more than worth its modest cost.

Jochum offers a relaxed account of the score, with qualities of lyricism and tonal shading you will admire, and yet with no serious loss of strength. My copy, however, suffered in the louder passages from some rattles and buzzes which I take to indicate a badly cut master. By the time you read these pages, this flaw may have been corrected. You can check on the opening chord of the final movement.

Walter brings us the youthful romantic, with a touch of the poet and a feeling for bravura as well as sentiment. It is a unique performance and a pleasing one, but you may want your young Beethoven to be more of a thunderer. The registration here is of chamber orchestra proportions with the winds rather strong in relation to the strings and dominating in that opening passage.

Rosenstock's reading, well recorded and projecting a disciplined German provincial orchestra effectively, is one of musical competence rather than any strongly individual character. As for Paray's overaccented performance, this edition is eliminated by wretched sonics in any case.

Monophonically, there are several desirable sets, among them the Klemperer on

Angel 35657 and Toscanini's performance, unchallenged in its classicism and polish, on RCA Victor LM 6009 (with the Ninth). Both the Scherchen and Von Karajan discs also remain impressive. The Jochum, without rattles in its single-channel form, is Decca DGM 12025.

—J. Keilberth, Bamberg Symphony Orch. TELEFUNKEN TCS 18004 (with Sym. No. 8). \$2.98.

—E. Jochum, Bavarian Radio Symphony. DECCA DGS 712025 (with Sym. No. 8). \$5.98.

—B. Walter, Columbia Symphony Orch. COLUMBIA MS 6078 (with Sym. No. 2). \$5.98.

—J. Rosenstock, Mannheim National Symphony Orch. JANUS 2002 (with *Leonore* No. 3 Overture). \$4.98.

—O. Klemperer, Philharmonia Orch. ANGEL S 35657 (with Sym. No. 8). \$5.98.

—P. Paray, Detroit Symphony Orch. MERCURY SR 90205 (with Sym. No. 2). \$5.95.

Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 36 (4 stereo versions)

The Second Symphony followed directly upon the First, the dates of composition being 1801–02. The first performance was in 1803. Long slighted for the sake of its more popular brethren, the Second appears finally to be coming into its own. It is in fact a superb work, notable not only for its remarkable first movement but for the sustained brilliance of the whole score.

The first three recordings listed below are all excellent, and therefore I cite them according to the seniority of the conductors. (The Paray is a rather heavy version, made even less attractive by inferior recording. No further comment is needed.) My own preference is for the Beecham. Not only do his readings of extracts from *The Ruins of Athens* make the second side unique in current Beethoven listings, but Sir Thomas' superb feeling for pulse and phrase is exactly what the symphony itself needs to be heard at its best. Although the recording tends to get a bit muddy in spots and there is some grumble and groan in place of clean bass, in general the sonics are pleasing.

Walter makes use of a smaller orchestra than Beecham's and his recording has a clarity—at times even a chamber quality—which Sir Thomas' does not match, largely because the latter conductor was not after this effect. I find it lovely. Walter's reading is quite emphatic in its rhetorical stresses, however; and since this is a score that contains a large number of such possibilities, the effect in the long run is somewhat inferior to that secured by less emphasis on these details of the structure.

Jochum's recorded sound best duplicates the effect of an orchestra in a hall, and his reading of the score, though somewhat less imaginative than that of the others, is blessed

by a union of orthodoxy and musicianship. If sound seems of primary importance, this is your best bet.

Monophonically, there are fine transfers of the three preferred stereo editions. A Klemperer recording will be available when you read this, and the Von Karajan, Van Beinum, Scherchen, and Toscanini editions all deserve attention, even if none of these four is really competitive with the newer sets.

—B. Walter, Columbia Symphony Orch. COLUMBIA MS 6078 (with Sym. No. 1). \$5.98.

—T. Beecham, Royal Philharmonic Orch. ANGEL S 35509 (with *Ruins of Athens*). \$5.98.

—E. Jochum, Berlin Philharmonic Orch. DECCA DGS 712006 (with *Ruins of Athens*, *Prometheus Overtures*). \$5.98.

—P. Paray, Detroit Symphony Orch. MERCURY 90205 (with Sym. No. 1). \$5.95.

Symphony No. 3, in E flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica") (9 stereo versions)

Beethoven began sketching material for the *Eroica* within a few days following the first performance of his Second Symphony, and the new work was completed before the close of 1803. There is a tendency to exaggerate the difference in scale between this work and its immediate predecessor, a practice that not only needlessly downgrades the Second but distorts the perspective of Beethoven's musical development.

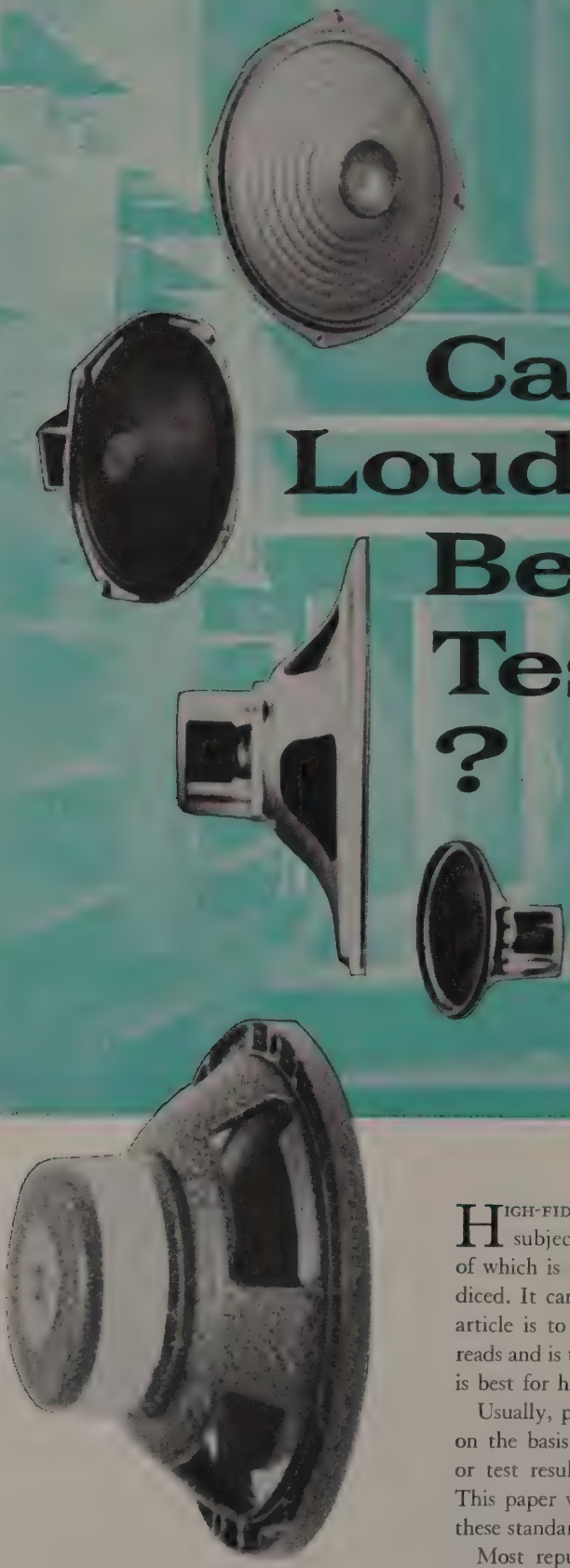
The *Eroica*, true enough, is a far greater concept and, strictly as a piece of musical architecture, proved the most impressive example of symphonic construction Beethoven's musical public had yet seen. Its greatness lies in its form and substance, however, rather than in its instrumental writing. Any group that could play Haydn or Mozart could perform the *Eroica*, provided a third horn player could be found.

A conductor cannot bombast his way to success in this score the way he can, at times, in the Fifth or Seventh. To make a strong effect, one must find the notes and play them with musicianship and strength.

Solti's version, in addition to superlative recording and ensemble playing, offers a reading that may be regarded as a synthesis of the two principal interpretative approaches to this music. It has the spaciousness and majesty that dominate the Keilberth performance, yet its rhythmic quality is strong and yields a feeling of propulsive movement nearly as forceful as the intense playing one hears under Walter, or—with even greater stress—under Scherchen and Munch.

To manage this, as Solti did, with an effect of artistic unity is an accomplishment of some distinction, based upon an impressive ability to choose exactly the right tempo needed for a

Continued on page 85



by Norman H. Crowhurst

Can Loudspeakers Be Tested ?

HIGH-FIDELITARIANS are, in general, an argumentative lot, but few subjects today arouse more passionate debate than the question of which is the best loudspeaker. The answer can, of course, be prejudiced. It can also be objective and informative. The intention of this article is to help the layman form a reasonable judgment of what he reads and is told—and ultimately to help him select the loudspeaker that is best for his particular needs.

Usually, people choose what they believe to be the best loudspeaker on the basis of one or more of the following criteria: its specifications or test results; the theory of how it works; how it sounds to them. This paper will discuss the varying importance which can be given to these standards of evaluation.

Most reputable manufacturers have good testing facilities, and for present purposes we'll assume that they maintain the specifications

they claim. Most try to do so, with some succeeding better than others. But what, actually, do performance specs mean in terms of how the loudspeaker will sound, even granted that a testing facility, for instance, finds that the manufacturer has, in fact, met his published specs? Several research groups have investigated the matter, and they all find that it is a question not to be answered simply.

Frequency Response

For one thing, in components other than speakers, the property first considered is usually frequency response. But where an amplifier can be flat within a fraction of a db to frequencies beyond the limit of human hearing, a loudspeaker is never that good. Not only does it deviate further from flat, it does so much more irregularly.

The best way to test a loudspeaker's frequency response is in an anechoic room—a place like a super-padded cell. Here there are no sound reflections to set up standing waves at different frequencies, as happens in most actual listening rooms when single test tones are used. Only this kind of room reveals what the loudspeaker itself does and makes it possible to secure repeatable results.

There are other methods of testing a speaker's frequency response, but we will not take up space herein comparing their relative merits. Interpreting the result is what we are concerned with.

However carefully it is measured, a good loudspeaker is apt to vary its response at different frequencies by several db, although its over-all effect may be almost flat. For example, the response at 1,050 cycles may differ by 4 or 5 db from that at 1,000 cycles. It may go up and down in this way throughout the frequency range. But if you average out the bumps, the effect looks fairly uniform.

It might then be deduced that one loudspeaker's response is flat within 5 db over the audible range. Another may stay within 3 db over the same range. On this basis, one might assume that the latter is much superior and will sound much smoother. And one might be quite wrong in drawing this conclusion. Why?

Suppose the first loudspeaker takes from 1,000 cycles to 1,700 cycles to rise 5 db, and from 1,700 to 2,500 before it drops, say, 4 db, and so on, lazily wandering up and down within its 5-db spread; suppose the second one makes a change of 3 db between 1,000 and 1,050 cycles, and almost as quickly goes back again. Obviously, although the second stays within closer limits, it has a more jagged and therefore a rougher response.

There are certain effects that a measured response cannot show—specifically, buzzes and birdies foreign to the test tone, which are set in motion by certain frequencies. Such effects are not uncommon. The only way to spot them is by listening or watching on an oscilloscope the waveform picked up by the test microphone.

Transient Response

Music does not consist of the steady tones (or slowly gliding one) used for measuring frequency response. Tones start abruptly at various fixed pitches (frequencies) in accordance with the melody or harmony. And the way they start, sustain, and die depends on the instrument playing them. The very beginning sound of a tone—the attack of the instrument—is quite different when played on, let us say, a saxophone than when played on a piano. This is equally true of the way instruments sustain a tone and the way the tone decays. The ability of a system to reproduce these special characteristics of various instruments is stated by engineers in terms of transient response. Many feel that transient response is much more responsible for how a loudspeaker sounds than frequency response as normally measured, and good reasoning supports this view.

Unfortunately, the first result of this reasoning was that some audio experts went off “half-cocked.” A variety of wave that would produce a checkerboard pattern on a TV screen had been successful in discovering some defects in amplifiers believed to be related to transient response. So, after these “square waves” were used to test amplifiers, they were applied to loudspeakers. While we will not argue here the validity of square wave testing of amplifiers, it seems reasonable to ask—with regard to their use in loudspeaker testing—“we know what a checkerboard should look like, but who knows what it should sound like?”

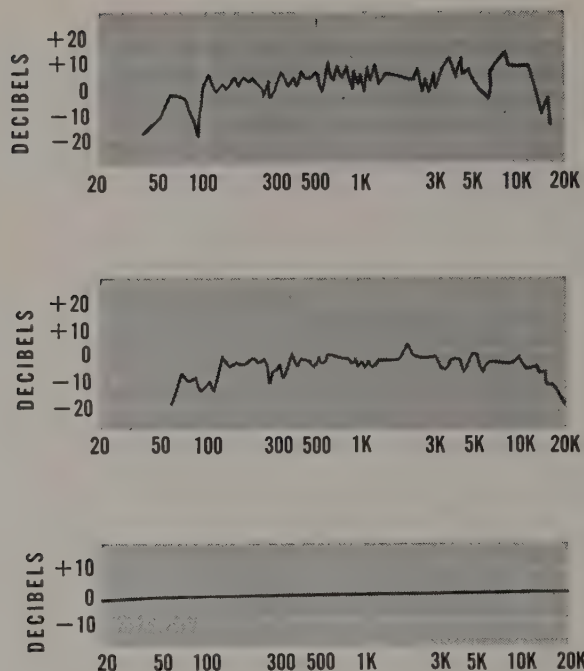
You can, of course, pick it up with a microphone in an anechoic room, amplify it, and look at it. But the possibility of getting all that additional equipment to handle a square wave without distortion is very remote. So the testers settled for measuring the result right across the voice coil terminals, thus ignoring acoustic problems and not bothering about whether the loudspeaker was making a square wave sound to correspond with whatever waveform appeared at the voice coil.

Although such waveforms have been published as evidence of the transient performance of a loudspeaker, they only indicate how the amplifier used for test behaves when the loudspeaker is connected instead of how it behaves with the usual resistance dummy load. Further, since the amplifier used is unidentified, the result is completely valueless.

Finally, the fact remains that a square wave of any frequency is not a transient in the musical, or program, sense. It is a continuous tone with a lot of harmonics. If the amplifier, loudspeaker, or any other component changes ever so slightly the time relationship or relative magnitude of these harmonics, the squareness of the wave disappears completely. Yet there may not be any audible effect on the tone.

The Informative Tone Burst

A fairly new form of test comes much closer to finding out how the system (particularly a loudspeaker) will



The three curves above indicate the frequency response of {top to bottom} an inexpensive loudspeaker system, a more expensive loudspeaker system of the same type and, finally, the typical response of a good amplifier. The reader, accustomed to an amplifier "curve" that can almost be drawn with a straight-edge, may regard the jagged response curve of a good loudspeaker with some alarm. More significant to our purpose here is the difference between the two loudspeaker curves. The less expensive and lower quality unit (top) shows many more variations over the measured frequency range than the more expensive unit of the same type (middle chart). And the amount of variation of the less expensive unit is greater.

sound with music. This is the tone burst test. Instead of a tone's being used continuously, it is switched on and off at intervals. A microphone picking up what the loudspeaker puts out shows whether the tone remains steady during the burst, and whether sound stops immediately as the tone is stopped.

The test should be made in an anechoic room, or else the microphone should be put so close to the loudspeaker that sound direct from it drowns out any room echo. Neither condition corresponds with a natural listening situation, but this test does find out how closely a loudspeaker can follow the initial contour of various notes as played by different instruments.

For tone burst tests to be meaningful as a basis for comparative evaluation, each loudspeaker would have to be subjected to the test at a very large number of frequencies and the effects would have to be analyzed very carefully. A tone burst test at frequencies where odd things show up in the frequency response can, however, be highly informative.

Distortion, Directivity, Dynamic Range

Already we've discovered plenty of difficulties in evaluating speakers. There are many more. What about distortion, directivity, dynamic range, and efficiency?

Measuring distortion in a loudspeaker is by no means as easy as measuring it in an amplifier. Particularly at low frequencies, a loudspeaker produces much more distortion than any good amplifier, microphone, or other component. And distortion is not always easy to measure. The total "spurious" sound that the microphone measures has to be picked up, and it may be the noise of a passing train or aircraft. Anechoic test rooms help, but true low level distortion, as the music listener will usually hear it, may not be picked up. This is the kind that makes a loudspeaker sound "fuzzy."

There are other problems in measuring a loudspeaker's distortion. For example, it may be caused by the amplifier although it doesn't show up in the amplifier's test. Correlation of results is far from easy without going into every conceivable cause of discrepancy. In fact, measuring different loudspeakers under identical conditions so that the results are useful for direct comparison of performance is virtually impossible.

Directivity of loudspeakers has received too little attention. Some have assumed that the sound should be distributed uniformly in all directions and at all frequencies. Maybe this was ideal—at least in some rooms—for monophonic reproduction. But stereo has altered the picture. Ideal directivity is very much involved with the acoustics of the room and the way the loudspeakers are placed in it. More of that in a moment.

Directivity is also coupled with frequency response. If the latter is measured straight in front (on axis) and the higher frequencies are projected in a narrow beam, the curve obtained will show better response than the speaker really gives. Thus a frequency response without some directivity measurement does not really convey much useful information.

Dynamic range has been rather overlooked in loudspeakers, although the rest of the system has heard about it. It was assumed that a loudspeaker must reproduce different levels proportionately to the power it receives if its distortion and frequency response are to be satisfactory.

This, in fact, isn't necessarily so. Some loudspeakers definitely need a certain power level before they become audible. Not that the sound produced is too low in volume level to be audible, but their diaphragms do not move at all until sufficient power is applied to overcome certain friction elements. This can severely restrict dynamic range, especially listening at a reasonably quiet level. It is undoubtedly one reason why some play their high-fidelity systems at maximum volume.

While *dynamic range* tells how well a loudspeaker handles the whole range of music, from pianissimo to fortissimo, *efficiency* is a measure of how sensitive it is—how much or how little power is needed to create the

fortissimo. This is another factor that is not easy to measure exactly. Electrical input power is fairly easy to measure. But acoustic output has to include total sound energy radiated in all directions. For our purpose, a rough comparison is all you need—whether a 10- or 25-watt amplifier will be enough to drive it. All speakers can be compared with the same one, used as an arbitrary reference. Whether the reference one is high, low, or medium efficiency is not too important. It enables you to know how much more or how much less power any other type needs.

As the above paragraphs have indicated, there's more to measuring the performance of a loudspeaker than is generally realized. Undoubtedly such measurements have played a part in developing better loudspeakers and will continue to do so. But the correlation between measurement and the effect of various deficiencies in reducing fidelity has been poor.

As for evaluating loudspeakers solely on the basis of theory, preconceived notions of the necessity of a particular type of enclosure or a specific variety of tweeter seem to me quite fruitless. Not only the experts are affected here. Others, with no knowledge of so-called theory, follow what the experts say. A special type of woofer or tweeter is a foregone conclusion for their choice. It is performance, not conformity to our pet principles, that counts.

Listening Factors

What about just plain comparative listening? Can't we switch from unit A to unit B and find out which is the better, then proceed to compare other units with the better of the first two so a complete relative evaluation will result? Of course we can, and many have done so. But there is no guarantee that any two sets of such tests will yield the same, or even similar, results. Three sources of difference—acoustic environment, listener conditioning, and program used—make it almost, if not quite, impossible to coordinate the results of tests made on this basis alone.

With monophonic presentation, the shape, size, and acoustic treatment of a room somewhat influence the directional patterns that give best realism. But for stereo, the interdependence becomes tremendous. Now the relative placement of loudspeakers for each channel enters the picture, as well as the acoustic environment in which they are heard.

The importance of these factors can be recognized both by measurement and by subjective evaluation. But now comes something that exists only in the subjective realm: listener conditioning. In some respects this is the most unpredictable factor of all. We can best illustrate how it works by a few typical case histories.

One listener has a loudspeaker with a screaming peak at about 6,000 cycles (not an uncommon place for one). He's been living with it for several years, listening

to all his favorite music reproduced from it. When he listens to a loudspeaker without this peak, his first reaction is that it is deficient in highs, the reason being that his hearing faculty has a built-in correction for a 6,000-cycle peak; if the peak isn't there, the response seems lacking. Another listener has become used to boomy bass, not the kind that accentuates just one note—that's too obvious and he's a sophisticated listener—but a range of almost an octave at the bass end. As a result, a system with measurably better fidelity seems to him deficient in bass. And even educated high-fidelity ears have had to make some adjustments in their listening habits in view of the spatial and other characteristics of stereo sound.

Then there are short-term conditioning effects, which probably present the biggest problem in establishing subjective relationships with measurable quantities. You are comparing sound A with sound B. When the switch is thrown from A to B, or vice versa, you can tell there is a difference. But after a few minutes' listening, each may sound satisfactory, until the switch is thrown again. As a result, you find it difficult to know which sounds better, or which possesses the peculiarity you were told to listen for.

This aspect of conditioning has an effect opposite from the long-term one. The difficulty is in knowing to what extent your hearing makes a temporary adjustment of this short-term variety, and to what extent it may be semipermanently distorted by a long-term effect—your listening rig at home, for instance.

Another important factor is program material. This is not so much a matter of whether the material is jazz, classical, or what-have-you (although it may be connected with that) as of how individual peculiarities may combine with those in the speakers. At least one prominent female vocalist uses a specially doctored microphone. If she uses any other, or if anyone else uses hers, the result is horrible. If microphones need tailoring to the oddities of specific voices, obviously some speakers will suit some programs better and vice versa. Almost any poor speaker can sound good on something.

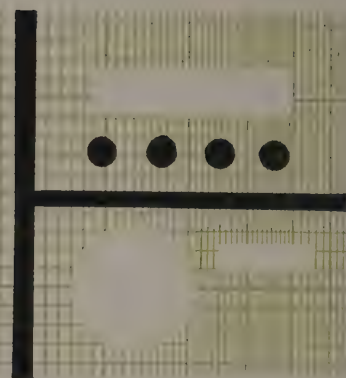
Taking all these factors of the problem into account, one can easily see how radically opinions may differ. There is no doubt that our hearing is more comfortable the less it has to make compensation for system deficiencies. We should, finally, get the most pleasure from a system that does not have the kind of deficiencies that produce long-term conditioning, even though our first reaction may mislead us.

The Impossible Absolute

System deficiency is not all in the loudspeaker. It is therefore impossible to arrive at any absolute speaker evaluation, even with the most unconditioned listening in the world. The ultimate performance involves a combination of variables: the program source and the way in which it was miked; *Continued on page 107*

*The consumers guide
to new and important
high fidelity equipment*

high fidelity



EQUIPMENT REPORTS

Garrard 210 Record Changer

AT A GLANCE: The Garrard Model 210 is an intermix changer with a number of desirable operating features. Our tests indicated that it has a relatively high rumble level, and an audible amount of flutter which may limit its use to less than a high-quality record playing system. Priced at \$49.50 (less cartridge), the 210 is finished in white, black, and chrome.

IN DETAIL: The designers of the Garrard Model 210 have achieved an excellent combination of operating simplicity and flexibility. The 210 is fully intermixing, with no adjustment required for 7-in., 10-in., and 12-in. records, which may be stacked in any order. A sliding lever makes the selection for each of the four playing speeds provided.

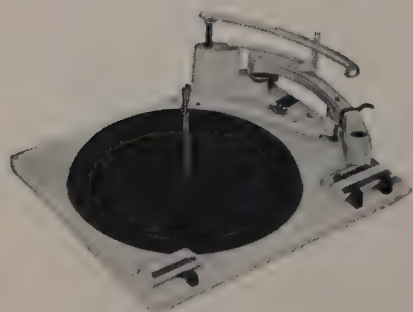
Separate controls are furnished for manual and automatic operation. The automatic control has the usual OFF-ON-REJECT positions. The overhead arm, which normally rests on the record stack, may be swung aside, and the turntable switched on by means of the manual control. The arm may then be placed on the record manually. At the conclusion of the record it returns to rest, and the motor switches off. As with most record changers offering a manual playing position, the trip mechanism is always operative, thus preventing the user from setting the pickup on the record near its center without tripping the changer mechanism.

An additional operating convenience is provided by the manual control. By moving it to the OFF position the playing of a record may be interrupted at any time; by moving it to ON, playing may be resumed without rejecting the record.

A unique feature of the Model 210 is the arm lock. A small lever under the pickup rest locks the arm firmly, preventing damage to the stylus if the changer is moved about, or even turned upside down. The lock is automatically released when either the manual or automatic control lever is operated.

A turntable brake stops the turntable within a second after the arm comes to rest. The speed accuracy of the turntable is excellent, and does not vary significantly when a stack of eight records is on the changer, or with line voltage variations from 100 to 130 volts. The variation of stylus force over a 1-in. change in pickup height is about 0.5 grams (at 4 grams).

The tracking error of the arm is less than 3 degrees over the entire record surface and is good for the short arm used in a record changer. The arm resonance (with an Empire 88 cartridge) is about 20 to 25 cps, at which point tracking becomes poor. An unfortunate result of the resonance occurring at this frequency is that the rumble (slightly below 30 cps) is accentuated. The rumble level was measured at -24.5 db relative to 5 cm/sec at 1,000 cps, and reduced to -26 db when the two channels were paralleled to cancel vertical rumble. The latter figure would have been considered quite respectable in the days before stereo, but the presence of vertical rumble, com-



bined with the lower recorded levels on stereo records, requires the use of speakers with limited bass response, unless playing volume is kept low.

The hum field from the motor of the Model 210 changer is reasonably low, though some hum can be heard as the pickup approaches the inside of the record. Induced hum is sufficiently below rumble level so that no difficulty should be experienced with stereo cartridges of recent manufacture.

The serious fault showed by our tests was in speed fluctuation (wow and flutter). Each measured 0.25%. Wow occurred during a brief portion of the turntable rotation, and was not particularly audible. Flutter, however, occurred at a 28-cps rate and was clearly audible on certain sustained notes. Flutter may be considered the most serious fault of the Model 210, but it might be overlooked by the casual or inexperienced listener. Since it is possible that this varies from unit to unit, we recommend that anyone considering the Garrard Model 210 listen critically to the changer or arrange with the dealer for exchange if it should not be satisfactory in this respect.

H. H. LABS.

AT A GLANCE: The Pickering 380A is one of the finest cartridges, mono or stereo, which we have tested. It is outstanding in smoothness of response, channel separation, high output, hum shielding, and ability to track high-level recorded passages without breakup. The price of the 380A is \$34.50.

IN DETAIL: The Pickering 380A is fully encased in mumetal to prevent induced hum from external magnetic fields. The stylus assembly inserts through an aperture in the end of the cartridge body, simplifying stylus changes for reasons of wear or using separate stylus for 78's. The effectiveness of this design is proved when the cartridge is connected to a preamplifier having a low internal hum level. No trace of increase in hum was found when the cartridge was connected to the preamplifier input, as compared to the level without anything connected to the preamplifier. In fact, at maximum gain there is no audible hum, merely the usual tube hiss.

This is all the more remarkable when the unusually high output level of the 380A is considered. It delivers 12.5 millivolts per channel at a stylus velocity of 5 cm/sec at 1,000 cps. In our usual hum sensitivity test we hold a tape head demagnetizer one inch from the stylus of the cartridge and measure the hum output relative to the output of the cartridge from a test record. We were unable to measure any induced hum in the 380A, even with the demagnetizer touching the cartridge.

The stereo frequency response from the Westrex 1A record shows a smooth, peak-free response all the way to 15 kc. The two channels are matched to within 1 db over the entire frequency range. Channel separation is unusually good, being better than 15 db up to 15 kc and better than 25 db over most of the important stereo range.

With channels paralleled, the monophonic response to a Cook 12 test record is also very smooth, with a resonant rise of about 4 db at 15 kc and usable response to beyond 17 kc. The shape of the plotted curve below 6 kc is due to the equalization of the record and our preamp, with cartridge characteristics becoming visible above 6 kc.

First hint of the remarkably high compliance of the 380A stylus came in attempting to measure the low frequency resonance with the Components 1109 sweep record (100 cps to 10 cps). Apart from a slight and smooth drop of level there was no resonance evident down to 10 cps. We played the record at half speed and found the resonance at approximately 7 cps (mounted in an Empire 98 arm). This is about an octave lower than any other cartridge we have tested.

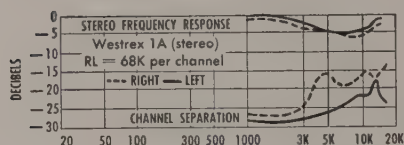
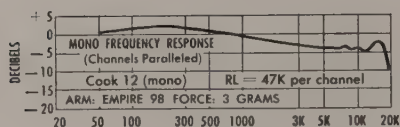
Such high compliance suggests that the cartridge should be able to track large amplitudes quite well. Our standard tracking test involves the playing of the Cook 60 chromatic scale record. The amplitudes of the lowest frequency bands of this record are so great that few cartridges can track them at any stylus force. In fact, prior to our

Pickering 380A Stereo Cartridge



Equipment tested by *High Fidelity* is taken directly from dealers' shelves. We report only on regular production-line models. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with *High Fidelity's* editorial department. Most equipment reports appearing here are prepared for us by Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, a completely independent organization whose staff was responsible for the original Audio League Reports. A few reports are prepared by members of the *High Fidelity* staff or by other independent testing organizations working under the general supervision of Hirsch-Houck Laboratories. All reports are signed.

REPORT POLICY



test of the Pickering 380A, only one stereo pickup—a rather expensive integrated design—had proved capable of doing this.

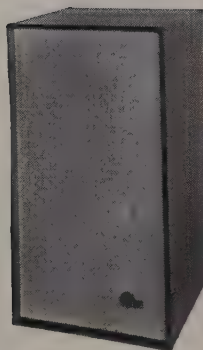
The 380A tracked this record perfectly at a stylus force of 2.5 grams.

Listening quality of the 380A, as one might suspect from the test data, is very smooth and clean. It was found to be quite different in character from that of earlier Pickering cartridges, which tended to be on the brilliant side, if not at times strident. The 380A has a deceptively mild sound, completely free from hiss or record noise. When either the upper or lower limits of the sound spectrum appear on a record, they are reproduced without strain or fuzziness.

Needle talk is moderately low and in a quiet room is not audible more than a foot or so from the pickup.

Construction of the 380A is such that it should have a long life, since the coil and magnet structure is fully encapsulated. In spite of its high compliance the stylus appears to be quite rugged, and is easily replaceable.

H. H. LABS.



**Altec Lansing's
Monterey Speakers**



ABOUT THIS REPORT: This is the first of a series of equipment reports on loud-speaker systems. Some of the problems encountered in measuring and evaluating speaker performance are detailed in the article by Norman H. Crowhurst elsewhere in this issue. Inasmuch as there is no single test, or group of tests, accepted as completely defining the performance of a loudspeaker, we will, for our evaluations, rely heavily on listening comparisons, using as our frame of reference loudspeakers with whose sound we are familiar, as well as laboratory measurements.

Our reference speaker is a popular bookshelf-sized unit selling in the \$100 range. It is in no sense the "best" system, but is widely recognized as having a natural, balanced sound relatively free from distortion.

Our laboratory measurements will be of four basic types. Frequency response curves will be taken, out-of-doors, with the loudspeaker facing upward to minimize reflections. Our microphone is a calibrated Altec 21BR150, which will normally be five feet above the center of the speaker. The response curves obtained in this manner are quite representative of the on-axis performance of the speaker at frequencies above 100 cps. Most speakers will not propagate low frequencies efficiently into a 180-degree solid angle (which is approximately what the speaker sees under these conditions).

The second test is a measurement of total harmonic distortion, for frequencies below about 200 cps. The actual values of distortion, of course, will depend on the level at which the speaker is driven. We will attempt to operate all speakers as near as possible to the same acoustic output level. In any case, the manner in which the low frequency distortion of the speaker increases as frequency is lowered is an excellent indication of the low frequency performance of the speaker.

The third test is a measurement of the polar response of the speaker at high frequencies. Using a fixed frequency, in the order of 7 kc, the speaker is rotated and the variation in sound pressure output is plotted against angular position. This is a measure of the directivity or beaming effect of the high frequency speaker or speakers.

The fourth, and in our opinion the most important, test is a tone burst measurement. A high frequency tone is applied to the speaker in short bursts, and the acoustic output is examined on an oscilloscope. An ideal speaker will reproduce the input waveform without delays in build-up or any continued ringing after the tone is cut off. The picture obtained in this test varies considerably with one's choice of frequency, so we will scan the frequency range of the speaker and photograph those patterns which appear to be typical of the over-all behavior of the speaker. There is good reason to think that the listening quality of a speaker is closely related to its response to transient signals, of which the tone burst is one type.

In our listening comparisons, the speakers will be listened to by themselves, as well as in the previously mentioned A-B comparisons with a reference speaker. This will normally be done in several acoustic environments, by several listeners. Divergent opinions, where they exist, will be presented.

AT A GLANCE: The Altec Monterey and Monterey Jr. are closely related in concept, with a single 8-in. woofer in the Jr. and two of the same type in the Monterey. The Monterey uses a Model 3000B horn-type tweeter, and the Monterey Jr. uses a Model 2000B cone-type tweeter.

The sound qualities of the two speakers are closely related, with the larger and more expensive Monterey having noticeably smoother highs and much solidier lows. Both speakers have plenty of presence, as well as a tendency for too bright highs which introduce a sharp attack sound on voice sibilants and similar sounds.

The units represent the firm's entry into the small-speaker field. Both are available in three finishes: walnut, blond, and mahogany. The Monterey (834A) measures 14 x 25 x 14½ in. and is priced at \$174. The Monterey Jr. (835A) measures 11¼ x 23 x 11¼ in. and sells for \$79.50. At \$69.50, the Jr. is available as an unfinished unit.

IN DETAIL: The Monterey Jr. will be considered first. Compact, light, and inexpensive, it is finished on four sides, and since its tweeter is a cone, it can be mounted in any position without problems of high frequency directivity.

With the exception of a peak and hole in its high frequency response, its frequency response is within plus or minus 7.5 db from 100 cps to 13 kc. The small free-edge cone tweeter runs into difficulties shortly after it takes over, with increased roughness compared to the woofer and a sizable peak at 9 kc. We also found a "birdie" or spurious response at about 4,700 cps, where the tweeter sang at a nonharmonically related frequency.

The sound of the speaker at high frequencies tended towards stridency. For example, the sound of a flute solo was noticeably altered by the peaky nature of the highs. The lows sounded fairly good, with a certain amount of false bass introduced by distortion of very low frequencies.

As the harmonic distortion curve shows, the low frequency response of the Jr. is adequate down to 70 or 80 cps. The response improves and distortion is lowered when the speaker is used in a normal home environment. This response may be considered adequate for a speaker of this size and efficiency.

The polar response of the Jr. at 7 kc. is very good. The data was taken with the speaker in a horizontal position, but since the tweeter is near one end, its response is not symmetrical. Nevertheless, the 7-kc response is within plus or minus 5 db over a 65-degree angle, and would cover 90 degrees if the speaker were mounted vertically.

The tone burst pictures are representative of the best and worst obtained from this speaker in the region from 2 kc upwards. In the case of the 6-kc tone, the speaker continues ringing with hardly diminished amplitude when the tone is cut off.

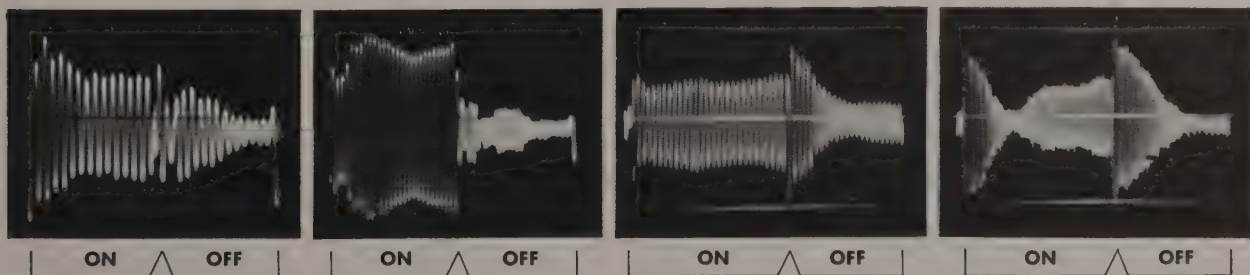
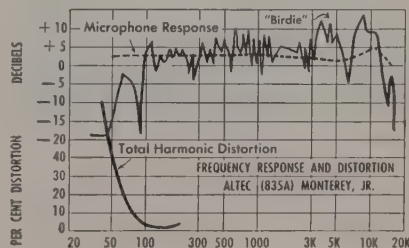
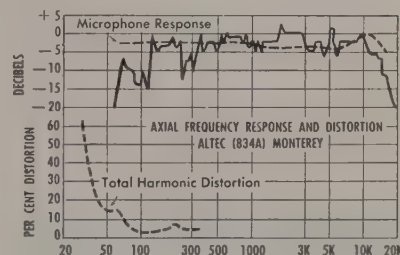
Since the Monterey has two woofers and something like twice the volume of the Jr., one would expect it to be appreciably better in low frequency performance. It is. The sound is full and well balanced, without the thin quality that sometimes characterizes its smaller relative. Bass drums come through well, where they may be entirely missing in the Jr.

Bass distortion is also lower in the Monterey. It does not break badly until 40 cps, though appreciable amounts of distortion are present between 40 cps and 60 cps.

Frequency response is clearly smoother than that of the Jr. The peaks are fewer and of smaller amplitude. The holes in the region of 250–300 cps are probably interference effects due to the position of the speaker during the measurements. Disregarding the holes, the response is within 5 db up to well beyond 15 kc (allowing for the response drop of the microphone). The polar response of the 3000B horn tweeter is excellent, covering well over 90 degrees at 7 kc. There is no tendency to beam highs.

In spite of the general smoothness of the frequency response, the tone burst tests showed the transient response to be rather poor. At 4.7 kc (the worst point) the output actually increased when the tone ceased, and continued throughout the "off" time. A slight change of frequency, to 5 kc, changed the picture, but not for the better.

The sound of the highs on the Monterey is smooth, but quite crisp and bright. Some of the same alteration of harmonic structure on flute tones that we noticed on the Jr. was heard on the larger system. There seemed to be an overemphasis on sibi-



Photographs of tone bursts for {left to right} Monterey Jr. at 6 kc, Monterey Jr. at 9 kc, Monterey at 4.7 kc and Monterey at 5 kc.

lants, cymbals, and wire brush sounds which could not be reduced with the Monterey's tweeter level control.

Listened to by itself, the Monterey sounds good—in fact, impressive at times. When compared to the reference speaker, it was unanimously judged (by five listeners) to lack extreme lows and to be excessively crisp in the highs. Its quality on male voice was excellent, without any trace of boominess. The sound of the less expensive Monterey Jr. is not as good as that of the Monterey, having some stridency and thin bass.

Both speakers are of moderate efficiency, somewhat lower than most Altec speakers. The Jr. is approximately 3 db more efficient than the Monterey when judged from white noise measurements.

The Jr. may appeal to many by virtue of its relatively low price. A pair may be suitable for a low-priced stereo system, or a single unit may be used as half of a stereo system with another speaker having more extended bass response.

The Monterey is better able to stand on its own feet, so to speak. Many people prefer a bright, crisp sound, and the Monterey offers just that. That small group devoted to pipe organs or big drums are the only ones likely to feel the lack of deep bass.

H. H. LABS.

Bogen SRB20

Stereo Receiver



AT A GLANCE: The Bogen SRB20 is a complete stereo receiver, including separate AM and FM tuners, stereo preamplifiers, and a pair of nominal 10-watt amplifiers. At \$219.50 it is relatively low-priced, meets its specifications, and is capable of being used as the nucleus of a medium-quality stereo music system. Attractively styled, with a gold-colored front panel, it may be used on a shelf or installed in a console.

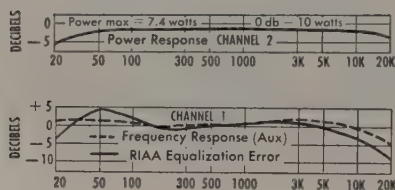
IN DETAIL: The Bogen SRB20 lacks many of the features found in more elaborate (and expensive) stereo systems, but is nevertheless capable of fulfilling its intended function. For example, the two channels have concentric volume controls, which are not clutched or ganged in any way. The two controls track well when they are set initially to the same point, but if they are offset even slightly, they can hardly be said to track at all. Thus to change volume, it is necessary to adjust each channel separately in order to balance the stereo position.

There are three positions on the input selector. One is for either a magnetic phono cartridge or a tape head. Only one or the other may be connected at a time, however. The second is for radio, using the built-in AM and FM tuners. The third is for a high-level auxiliary input or a crystal phono cartridge. Input impedance of this circuit is several megohms, making it especially suitable for a ceramic stereo cartridge. A pair of outputs are provided to drive a tape recorder. Provision is made for adding an external FM multiplex adapter.

Bass and treble tone controls are concentrically mounted, and separate for each channel. Separate tuning knobs control the AM and FM receivers. A somewhat unusual (and possibly confusing) system is employed to switch between the AM and FM tuners. Each has its own slide switch, with three positions. At the left position, the tuner section corresponding to each switch is turned off. At the right position, each tuner is on, as they would be used for AM-FM stereo reception. The AM tuner switch, in its center position, cuts off the AM signal and substitutes the output of a multiplex adapter, should one be connected. The center position of the FM switch cuts off the AFC on the FM tuner.

An important omission from the SRB20 is that of a means of paralleling the two channels, or of feeding either channel to both speakers. A so-called "stereo-mono" switch is located in the rear of the unit, but this merely feeds channel 1 output (including the FM tuner output) to both speakers. In this condition, the AM tuner is not usable. One cannot parallel the two outputs of a stereo cartridge for playing a mono record.

Performance of the amplifiers of the SRB20 is adequate for their intended use, and is as good as one would expect in a low-cost amplifier. The intermodulation distortion is quite low at usual listening levels, and each channel delivers its rated 10 watts at less than 2% IM distortion. This power is available over the useful audio range, with the usual moderate drop-off at very low frequencies. Incidentally, the Bogen specifications refer to the power output rating of the SRB20 as a "music waveform rating." This



means that it applies with transient signals, as approximated in an intermodulation distortion test. The maximum continuous power output is approximately 7.5 watts per channel.

Frequency response and phono equalization accuracy of the SRB20 are satisfactory. There is a slight rolloff above 7 kc, which can be corrected adequately by means of the tone controls if desired, though it is doubtful that anyone could hear it in the first place.

Hum levels are low on the various preamplifier inputs, and are inaudible at any likely-to-be-used gain setting. Stereo channel separation is 40 db at 1,000 cps, or well beyond the performance of records or cartridges. It was interesting to find that the power amplifiers of the SRB20 were hardly affected by large capacitive loads, and were stable under such operating conditions.

To summarize, the amplifiers of the Bogen SRB20 are as good as we have seen in an instrument of its price, and are capable of delivering excellent sound quality when used with reasonably efficient speakers or if played at sensible volume levels.

The FM tuner of this receiver also proved to be of remarkably good quality. (If we seem surprised at this discovery, it is merely because the SRB20 is obviously made to sell at a highly competitive price and compromises inevitably are made in the design of such equipment. In this case, the compromises are all in matters of flexibility and convenience rather than performance.)

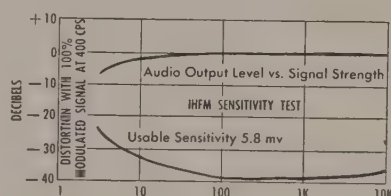
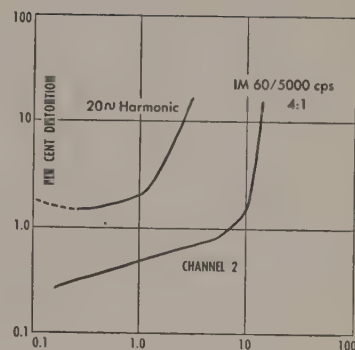
Usable sensitivity, by IHFM Standards, was 5.8 microvolts. The AGC action was very effective, with almost no change in audio output level when the input signal was increased from 10 microvolts to 100,000 microvolts. The distortion rating of the FM tuner in Bogen's specifications is 1.5% (presumably at 100% modulation), and it was measured as less than 1.4% for signal strengths from 100 microvolts to several thousand microvolts.

There is no tuning eye, but the intersection hiss is strong enough to serve as a good guide to proper tuning. The AFC is effective, without being so strong that it will cause one to miss stations sandwiched between two strong signals. Although it continues for at least 30 minutes, the warm-up drift is moderate, and since the AFC is good enough to compensate for it, no retuning is required during warm-up. Stability against line voltage changes is good.

The rudimentary AM tuner is comparable in quality of sound to a table radio. Its value in AM-FM stereo broadcasts is questionable, though enough high frequency boost can be introduced via the tone controls to make it tolerable. The built-in loopstick antenna offers adequate sensitivity for local reception. Incidentally, the FM section may be used with a built-in antenna connection, making use of the power line. This gives good reception within twenty-five miles or so of an FM station.

A final small criticism, valid only in those areas served by a great many FM stations, is that the FM tuning dial is calibrated at 4-megacycle intervals, and a certain amount of hunting around may be required to find a given station.

H. H. LABS.



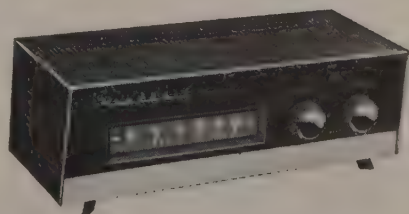
AT A GLANCE: The Heath FM-4 is a rather basic FM tuner, similar in many ways to its somewhat less expensive predecessor, the FM-3a. Construction has been simplified and performance enhanced by use of a preassembled and aligned "front end." Without any alignment by the builder, it meets or exceeds its specifications in all important respects. The FM-4, measuring $4\frac{1}{4} \times 13\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ in., has a vinyl-clad steel cover and a black-with-brushed-gold-trim front panel. A very good value at \$34.95 in kit form.

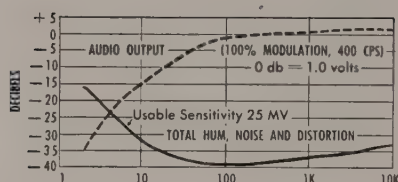
IN DETAIL: Heath engineers have extracted an amazing amount of performance from only five tubes in the FM-4. The front end is supplied fully assembled and aligned. Included within it is the silicon diode voltage-variable capacitor which provides AFC action. Lone tube is grounded-grid RF amplifier, mixer, and oscillator.

The IF amplifier is conventional, with two stages of gain and a limiter. A single tube contains the two diodes of the ratio detector and a cathode follower audio output stage. A silicon diode is used in the power supply.

The dial mechanism is smooth and easy to operate and is well illuminated by an edge-lighted lucite dial face. The FM-4 has a front panel mounted volume control and AFC ON-OFF switch, but no tuning eye. In addition to the low impedance audio output, a multiplex output is taken off ahead of the deemphasis network.

Heath FM-4 Tuner Kit





Our sensitivity measurements are made in accordance with the IHFM Tuner Measurement Standards, while Heath's specifications are based on another measurement procedure. Therefore, no direct comparison is possible. According to the IHFM procedure, the usable sensitivity is 7.5 microvolts, which is excellent. Unfortunately, the audio output from the FM-4 is quite low until input signals of perhaps 20 microvolts or greater are used. One would require a 35-microvolt signal to develop 0.5 volts of audio when modulated 100%, which suggests this as a reasonable lower limit of sensitivity with most preamplifiers.

Above 100 microvolts the limiting is fully effective, and there is no further improvement in performance with stronger signals.

We measured warm-up drift, without AFC, and found that an initial drift of some 25 kc occurred in the first minute, followed by a slow and steady drift amounting to some 100-kc total in five minutes. The AFC action was on the mild side, reducing drift and mistuning by a factor of only two. Fortunately, the IF and detector bandwidths of the FM-4 are sufficiently wide so that this moderate drift is not troublesome. The frequency of the FM-4 oscillator was strongly affected by line voltage. Most localities, however, do not have widely, rapidly fluctuating power line voltages. If such a condition should exist, it might prove troublesome.

The AM rejection of the FM-4 is unusually good. It is aided by the combined action of a limiter (two stages on strong signals) and a ratio detector, which is inherently insensitive to AM.

The frequency response of the tuner is within plus or minus 0.8 db from 20 to 20,000 cps, and its low impedance output is unaffected by any reasonable amount of cable capacitance.

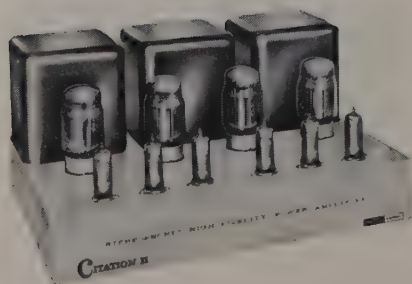
Two criticisms of the FM-4 seem worth stating. Tuning is a trifle uncertain due to the lack of a tuning eye. Interstation hiss is very low, and frequently one cannot tell when a station is tuned in unless tuning is done at high-volume control setting. This is likely to result in blasting from strong stations.

The second problem can be easily resolved by the user. The output jack is directly coupled to the cathode follower, and is at a potential of approximately 15 volts. If this is connected to a preamplifier or power amplifier without an input blocking capacitor (such as the Dynakit we used), the result will be either excessive distortion or (in our case) very noisy and "thumpy" volume control action. We strongly recommend putting a blocking capacitor of 0.05 or 0.1 mfd between the output tube cathode and the connector. There is also a possibility of damaging the output tube of the tuner if the output circuit becomes accidentally short-circuited (some preamplifiers deliberately short all unused inputs). Fortunately, the remedy is easy and inexpensive.

To sum up, the Heath FM-4 is a good quality tuner, especially at its price, capable of delivering as good performance as many manufactured tuners.

H. H. LABS.

Harman-Kardon Citation II



AT A GLANCE: The Harman-Kardon Citation II is a dual 60-watt power amplifier employing advanced circuit design and the finest components and construction practices. Available in kit form or prewired, it ranks among the finest amplifiers made.

Its impressive performance specifications, which it lives up to easily, do not by any means tell the whole story. Its listening quality is superb, and not easily described in terms of laboratory measurements. Listening is the ultimate test, and a required one for full appreciation of the Citation II. The price of the kit is \$159.95, of the factory-wired version \$219.95. Each is finished in charcoal brown and gold.

IN DETAIL: To our knowledge, the Citation II is the only dual 60-watt amplifier made on one chassis. It is large, rugged, and extremely heavy (60 lbs.). No pains have been spared to achieve the highest performance, and this, of course, is reflected in its price.

Extensive use is made of multiple internal feedback paths in order to extend frequency response at least two octaves beyond the audible range at both ends, with a minimum of phase shift. Ten tubes are used, but of only two types. This sensible design makes it practical to keep spares on hand without undue expense. The power supply uses silicon rectifiers, with a resulting excellent regulation which makes it possible to deliver full power continuously from both channels.

A built-in metering system makes it easy for the user to maintain the amplifier in proper adjustment as tubes age or are replaced, thus insuring continued top performance.

We did not measure its performance outside the limits of 20 to 20,000 cps. There is no point in plotting frequency response and power response, since the former is perfectly flat and the latter down less than 0.7 db from full power at the 20 and 20,000 cycle points.

Intermodulation and harmonic distortion fell to the residual levels of our test equipment at usual listening levels of a watt or less. Both harmonic and IM distortion curves rise gradually as power is increased. They are both very low, though not as low as we have measured on some other fine amplifiers. It is interesting to observe that the 20-cps harmonic distortion curve lies directly on the IM curve, indicating that the small amount of distortion we were measuring was in the circuits proper and probably not in the output transformers (usually the weak link in any power amplifier design).

At 20 cps, the maximum power (at the 1% distortion level) was about 55 watts, but the IM curve, more representative of the power which can be realized with music waveforms, extended to over 75 watts at 1% distortion. The amplifier was stable under any load conditions we could devise. Below 10 watts, hum and noise were 75 to 80 db, a completely inaudible level.

Our tests were made on a unit which had been in use for a time. Before making our measurements, we performed the balancing and adjustment procedure outlined in the instruction manual. It seems likely that our test results are typical of what can be expected of a Citation II after a period of home use.

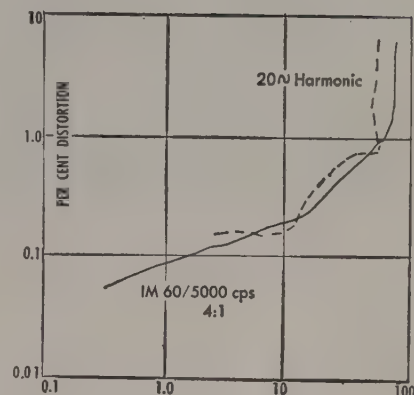
So far, except for its great power and ingenious design, the performance data described herein might appear to be no better than those of a number of other fine amplifiers. Because of unexplained factors such as phase shift, overload recovery, etc., we have always been skeptical of claims that "Amplifier X sounds better than Amplifier Y." In most cases there is no audible difference between good amplifiers.

However (and here we depart from the laboratory and rely on our ears), the Citation II seems to have a special quality which may be unique. Without a full-fledged A-B comparison among a number of amplifiers, this would be difficult to prove—perhaps impossible. Be that as it may, there is a solidity, combined with a total ease and lack of irritation, which sets this amplifier apart from most others.

At low levels, this difference is not particularly apparent, but we found that the listening volume of the Citation II (as compared to some other very fine amplifiers of comparable power rating) can be increased considerably without introducing any annoyance or distortion. Furthermore, one can employ full treble and bass boost to a degree which would be intolerable with most amplifiers, and hardly be aware of the boost. Possibly this is due to its ability to handle its full power throughout the entire audio spectrum without overload.

Whatever the reasons, the more one listens to the Citation II, the more pleasing its sound becomes. This quality is not likely to be discovered in the usual A-B listening comparison; it becomes apparent by listening over an extended period.

The construction of the Citation II is no job for a beginner, and the kit builder must be prepared to take considerable time. But anyone who will settle for nothing less than the finest will be well advised to look into the Citation II. H. H. LABS.



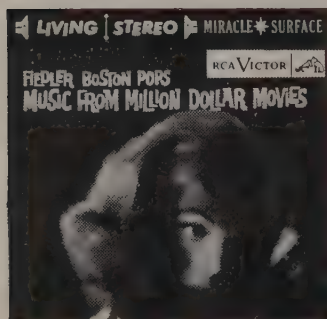
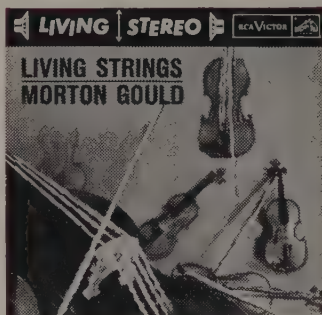
NEXT MONTH'S REPORTS

Dynakit PAS-2 Stereo Preamplifier
Acoustic Research AR-2a Speaker System
Stromberg-Carlson PR-500 Turntable
Paco SA-40 Stereo Control Amplifier . . . and others



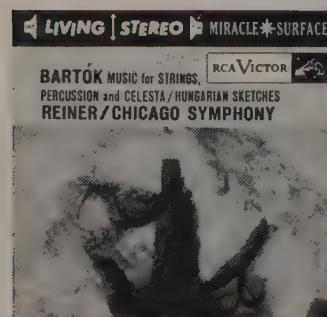
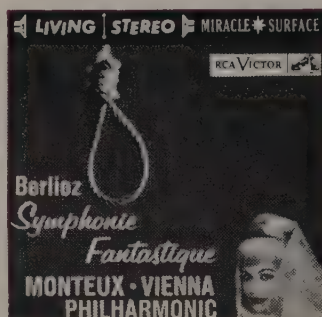
This collaboration of a master pianist and a new star among violinists is an event of the first magnitude. It is Rubinstein's first recording ever of the "Kreutzer." And Szeryng, you remember, won the 1959 First Prize of the "Académie du Disque Français" for his RCA Victor album of the Brahms Violin Concerto.

Everything concert strings can do (and they are unique among instruments for plasticity of texture and color), Morton Gould has them do here. And if you think Gould's best-selling "1812" and "Bolero" are something in stereo, you'll hurry to hear Mr. Stereo's settings of favorites like "Pizzicato Polka."



Music from the best-remembered movies of the past twenty years is here given full symphonic treatment by Fiedler and the Boston Pops. Examples: the most stirring recordings you've ever heard, in hi-fi or stereo, of the "Warsaw Concerto," "Intermezzo," "Laura," "Moulin Rouge," "Gigi," "Cornish Rhapsody."

Two Monteux 85th birthday albums. For most listeners, the "Fantastique" and Monteux are synonymous. This reading, with the Vienna Philharmonic, is stunning! Its companion—Tchaikovsky's 4th, with the Boston Symphony—completes Monteux's cycle of the last three Tchaikovsky symphonies.



Reiner studied piano under Bartók at the Budapest Academy. He remained a devoted admirer, introducing much of Bartók to America (e.g., the "Sketches"). "Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta," an exciting addition to the Reiner repertoire, reflects his 50-year rapport with Bartók's music.



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by Roland Gelatt

Music Makers

THE MOST POTENT partnership in the annals of recorded music—that of Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra—has been reactivated after a lapse of nineteen years. This winter the seventy-seven-year-old conductor returned to his former podium to make a series of guest appearances with the Philadelphians.

The reunion turned out to be a great one. Stokowski was in his very best form, and the orchestra (still essentially his creation) surpassed even its usual high standard. This conductor and this orchestra were obviously made for each other. They were also obviously made to make records—a fact duly noted by Columbia. Scheduled for release this fall are the first new Stokowski-Philadelphia discs in almost two decades—a Bach collection and a coupling of Falla's *El amor brujo* with the conductor's "symphonic synthesis" of *Tristan*.

We met Stokowski on the morning of the recording session at Philadelphia's 30th Street Station and taxied with him to the Broadwood Hotel, where Columbia now records the orchestra. This change of recording locale from the old Academy of Music puzzled the conductor. "The Academy has always been one of the world's great recording halls," he said, "and I do not understand why we should not make records there." The young man from Columbia who accompanied us explained that it is possible to achieve much better stereo separation in the Broadwood than in the Academy. "Ah, that is a good reason," Stokowski commented. "It is essential to have proper separation between the three channels. Otherwise we might just as well listen to a monophonic recording over two speakers. Stereo is similar to *pointilliste* painting. It is a fusion of sounds. But to achieve the right effect you must have good separation."

We arrived at the Broadwood and

went up to the Grand Ballroom, an auditorium similar in size and appearance to the Manhattan Center Ballroom in New York. Stokowski made a quick survey of the room, the microphone placement, and the seating, then asked that the rows of string players be spread further apart. We could see that he did take separation very seriously indeed. Howard Scott, the recording director in charge, told us later that Stokowski favors a considerably more widespread seating arrangement than is customary for Philadelphia Orchestra sessions.

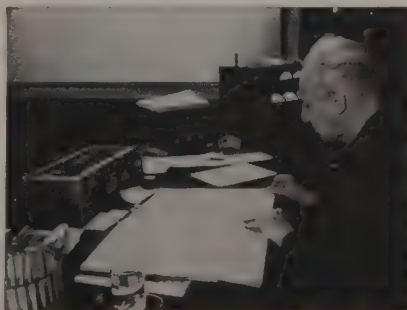
At eleven o'clock, with the chairs in their new places, Stokowski began to conduct the first piece on the day's agenda, his transcription of the Bach chorale-prelude *Ich ruf' zu dir*. He kept on for about twenty seconds, then clapped his hands and announced: "We're ready for a take." After running through the piece once (it lasts about four minutes), he told the musicians to take a rest and went out into the anteroom to hear the playback through three KLH speakers. As the music started, Stokowski looked at the engineer's control panel and noticed that the three VU meters for the three channels were not registering. The chief engineer explained that the meters work only during recording, not for the playback. "But I must see these working," the conductor pro-

tested. "What sounds here in this room is one thing; what sounds on the tape is quite different. It does not matter so much now, but for the *Tristan* I must have VU meters. I won't know what I'm doing without them." The engineer promised to see what he could do. When Stokowski returned from a short lunch break, he found a special set of VU meters installed for his benefit.

Stokowski seemed at all times intensely aware of the three sound sources. His eyes kept shifting from speaker to speaker, as if he were seeing beyond them to the specific instrumentalists on whom he was concentrating attention. While he listened he kept up a running commentary on the details that needed rectification. Howard Scott noted them all down on a pad of paper. At the end of each playback, Stokowski took Scott's notes with him to the podium and gave instructions to his players. The procedure, Scott admitted, made the recording director's lot a fairly easy one. "He does all the work. He doesn't say to us 'Can you fix this?' He fixes it himself."

Midway through *El amor brujo* it was time for us to return to New York. "You left much too soon," Stokowski chided the next day when we met at a cocktail party. "The session lasted until midnight. I've never done so much recording at one stretch in my life. I think the results may be good." To judge from what we heard at the Broadwood, the results ought to be spectacular.

THREE WEEKS before the Philadelphia Orchestra session, Stokowski and the Symphony of the Air gathered in Manhattan Center to record Ernest Bloch's *America*, "a rhapsody for orchestra in three movements." This is the first in a series of recordings of American music to be sponsored by the William Hale Harkness Foundation in cooperation with Vanguard Records.



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Vol. 1 AFLP 1877/AFSD 5877,
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A Hot Time in the
Old Town Tonight
None of My Jelly Roll
Big Butter & Egg Man
I Ain't Got Nobody

Chimes Blues
Dr. Jazz
My Old Kentucky Home
Drop That Sack
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Records in Review



Vladimir Horowitz

Beethoven Piano Sonatas in Stereo

Inaugurate New Horowitz Series

by Robert C. Marsh

IN THOSE immortal words of pressagentry, which you will find flapping from a slip on the front of this record sleeve, Vladimir Horowitz is "a pianist who is a legend in his own time."

The cliché in this instance states a fact. Horowitz at fifty-five can look back on one of the most remarkable careers any virtuoso instrumentalist has enjoyed in the past century. Indeed from the time of his New York debut—when he was only twenty-three—until seven years ago, he was very probably the dominant force among pianists, the representative for our time of the supreme technician, the man who could do anything.

I do not think that Horowitz's reputation among his colleagues is any less potent today than it was in the past, but for the music audience seven years is a fairly long time. There must now be many listeners who never

have had an opportunity to hear Horowitz in recital and who try to gauge the original from a pupil or imitator. I have thought at times of writing a study entitled *The Baleful Effects of Horowitz on the Art of Pianism*, but whenever I came to framing charges, I always realized that a similar indictment could be brought against any great performer. Horowitz himself has always been a sufficiently remarkable musician to see and avoid the excesses that stimulate the would-be Horowitz to his worst.

The Horowitz the public knew from 1928 until early in 1953 has been supplanted by a Horowitz met only in recordings. Their evidence shows that during his sabbatical years he has lost none of the technique that went into the making of the legend; it also reveals a depth in some of his work that did not appear to be there before. His editions of

the Beethoven *Moonlight* and *Waldstein* Sonatas, released in 1957, were competitive with the work of Beethoven specialists such as Rudolf Serkin—a state of affairs that hardly fitted the Horowitz stereotypes.

This latest Victor release—made in Carnegie Hall and inaugurating a new series of Horowitz recordings (his first, incidentally, in stereo)—is another scholarly product. The *Appassionata*, which, for all its overweening popularity he has here recorded for the first time, is presented in a carefully built performance based upon a photographic copy of the original manuscript in the Paris Conservatoire, although apparently Horowitz studied all the standard texts in the process of forming his interpretative conclusions. These I find remarkably convincing, more so, indeed, than his statement of the earlier sonata that completes the disc. One

of the great problems in the *Appassionata* is pacing the work so as to provide a convincing shift from the Allegro ma non troppo that opens the final movement to the Presto that closes it. If the Allegro is too fast, the effect of the Presto is lost, either because the pianist cannot play rapidly enough to provide a strong contrast or because in attempting to do so he reduces the final pages to a jumble of wrong notes.

One can hardly charge Horowitz with a lack of technique or an overly cautious approach. Listening to the rising series of chords in the opening of the first movement you will hear his playing, particularly in stereo, with an impact greater than you may ever have experienced in the concert hall. It is his sense of balance and proportion that keeps him from rushing headlong in this

music and the results could easily be the most interesting recording of the *Appassionata* to appear this year.

The heart of the Op. 10, No. 3 Sonata is its slow movement, a Largo that must be heard with the full sustaining power of the piano used to advantage. The cruelest thing one can do to any Beethoven sonata recording is to play it against the Schnabel version, and if you do this to the Horowitz, you will, I think, discover two things. First, that Schnabel gets somewhat more from this music than Horowitz does; second, that the Horowitz recording, which of course is incomparably superior technically, can withstand this comparison better than most.

Indeed it may be the very strength of the recording, with its startling "you are there under the piano lid" quality, that appears to

give this work a weight of tone more appropriate to middle period Beethoven than Opus 10. (For all the proximity, incidentally, an automobile horn from Seventh Ave. intrudes at one point of the slow movement.) But this is a small matter, as, indeed, are any quibbles about this disc that ignore the central issue: Horowitz is once more at work for the microphone, and these new recordings could be the finest of all his fabulous years.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 7, in D, Op. 10, No. 3; No. 23, in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata")*

Vladimir Horowitz, piano.

● RCA VICTOR LM 2366. LP. \$4.98.

● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2366. SD. \$5.98.



For a twenty-fifth anniversary.

by Harris Goldsmith

Honoring Both Composer and Performer, Three Discs of Robert Casadesus

FOR WHATEVER REASON, at least three generations of American concertgoers have responded most wholeheartedly to the lush tone, romantic fervor, and physical excitement which characterize Slavic playing. The more restrained and objective French school, on the other hand, has been regarded with reservation, if not with outright antagonism. Yet one of the relatively few French artists to be widely acclaimed in this country is Robert Casadesus, whose proportioned style, rhythmic thrust, and clean technique mark him particularly as a classicist. It is in honor of the twenty-fifth anniversary of his American debut that Columbia now issues these three discs.

One record is devoted to Casadesus the composer, the other two feature him in his more familiar role as a concert pianist. If one can draw conclusions from the sleeve notes, Casadesus would like to be known as a French pianist and as a Spanish composer. His grandfather Luis Casadesus was a Catalan, and both compositions recorded here

make use of Spanish dance forms and are permeated with Spanish color. I myself was most impressed with the Sextuor, composed in 1958 and written in a style close to that of Poulenc and Honegger. The first movement in particular has a compelling rhythmic thrust in which the piano's bass accents combine with the bright, slightly nasal woodwind timbre to suggest an exuberant folk dance played on the accordion. The entire piece, in fact, is lively, witty, and concise; it should gain many admirers. Perhaps the presence of strings inevitably makes the 1949 Nonetto more lyrical and softer in outline. The annotation stresses the originality of Casadesus' writing and his emphatic rejection of serial techniques. Nevertheless, I found the Nonetto eclectic in style and rather nebulous. The second movement (especially the beginning for string quartet alone) kept evoking in my mind obsessive images of Shostakovich's Violin Concerto. (Since the Nonetto preceded that work by some four years and it is unlikely that the

two men communed with each other, the resemblance must be purely coincidental.) Perhaps further hearings will produce a different impression of the work. The performances are presumably definitive, the recording excellent in both versions.

Unfortunately, some of Casadesus's less notable efforts as a composer are on exhibition in the disc which couples Beethoven's First and Fourth Piano Concertos. The pianist replaces Beethoven's cadenzas with his own, which are rather trivial-sounding and lack motivic development. As for the performances, I found that of the First rather tame. Casadesus and Van Beinum favor for the opening movement a deliberate "Central-European" tempo, which to be effective needs more impetus and force than Casadesus provides. (And like most of today's pianists, Casadesus incorrectly plays appoggiaturas before, rather than on, the beat.) Similarly, the almost flippant tempo chosen in the Largo does not conceal the blandly uninflected line. (No pianist has equaled Schnabel in this

movement.) The Fourth Concerto is altogether more admirable. A Casadesus version of this work was previously available in an older recording with Ormandy. This new one reflects the progress made by the pianist and the recording technicians. It is not at all like the exquisite reading of Gieseeking with its Mozartean grace, fluency, and beautiful coloristic detail, nor does it have the asymmetrical phraseological distentions and conversational "grouplets" of the Schnabel-Fleisher performances. Casadesus's work is cool-headed, shapely, and chiseled. His runs are pearly smooth, and the superbly athletic treatment of filigree passages (notably at measures 204-226 in the first movement) could only come from a veteran performer. And if his ideas are occasionally a trifle conventional, they are always in good taste.

Van Beinum and the Concertgebouw give tonally ravishing support to both concertos. The LP gave beautiful sound. In the stereo, the piano, firmly placed slightly left of center in the First Concerto, began in parts of the Fourth to wander like a beacon light. There was also considerable distortion and surface noise on my test pressing. I would suggest that the buyer interested in stereo sample his copy if possible. Even disregarding the distortion on the SD, I preferred the closer, more immediate monophonic sound.

The Bach disc is, if I am correct, the first recorded example of Casadesus's playing of that composer. The artist concentrates on clarity of outline and rhythmic propulsion. He treats the piano as a percussive instrument and eschews tonal richness, crescendos, and other pianistic devices. In the *Italian* Concerto and once or twice in the *Partita*, I thought the pianist's *martellato* attack and rhythmic emphasis were slightly overdrawn, but it is refreshing to hear Bach played in so zestful a manner. Columbia has captured the characteristic harpsichordlike twang of Casadesus's tone beautifully.

M. Casadesus has dedicated a lifetime to music; we wish him a happy anniversary.

CASADESUS: *Sextuor for Piano, Woodwinds, and French Horn, Op. 58; No-netto for Piano, Woodwinds, and String Quartet, Op. 45*

Robert Casadesus, piano.

- COLUMBIA ML 5448. LP. \$4.98.
- ● COLUMBIA MS 6121. SD. \$5.98.

BEETHOVEN: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in C, Op. 15; No. 4, in G, Op. 58*

Robert Casadesus, piano; Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eduard van Beinum, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5437. LP. \$4.98.
- ● COLUMBIA MS 6111. SD. \$5.98.

BACH: *Partita No. 2, in C minor, S. 828; Concerto in F, S. 971 ("Italian"); Toccata and Fugue, in E minor, S. 914*

Robert Casadesus, piano.

- COLUMBIA ML 5446. LP. \$4.98.
- ● COLUMBIA MS 6120. SD. \$5.98.



At the forefront of the avant-garde.

In Retrospect—the Music of John Cage

by Alfred Frankenstein

A LIFETIME dedicated to the pursuit of musical innovation is compellingly documented in a new album entitled *The Twenty-Five-Year Retrospective Concert of the Music of John Cage*. The concert itself took place at Town Hall, New York, on May 15, 1958, and the entire program is issued on three stereophonic discs published by George Avakian and available from P.O. Box 374, Radio City Station, New York 19, N. Y., and at some record shops.

John Cage, pupil of Henry Cowell and Arnold Schoenberg, once active on the West Coast but a New Yorker since 1943, has long ridden on the front bumper of the *avant-garde*. There have been times when it seemed as if any musical novelty could claim his allegiance, but, as these records and their accompanying pamphlet show, this is not true. In spite of momentary deviations this way and that, there has been a consistent line to his work; it holds together, and the recorded program clarifies the essential shape of his career.

The six sides contain nine works produced between 1934 and 1958. Throughout that period, Cage was fascinated by percussive sounds: hence the *Construction in Metal*, for percussion ensemble; the Quartet for Twelve Tom-Toms; the Sonatas and Interludes for Prepared Piano; and the song *The Wonderful Widow of Eighteen Springs*, for voice and piano percussively treated.

A prepared piano is, of course, one whose tone colors have been altered by the attachment to its strings of screws, bolts, rubber erasers, and similar oddments. As Cage himself puts it, a prepared piano is in effect a percussion ensemble under the control of a single player. Eight of his sonatas and two of his interludes for this instrument are included, and they fill two of the six sides. In *The Wonderful Widow of Eighteen Springs* the

piano is completely closed and the performer drums on it with his fingers and knuckles; four drumming areas are stipulated and provided for in the notation—the belly, the top, and two spots on the keyboard lid—and the notation also makes it clear if fingertips or knuckles are to be used. The piano part of this song is a real feat of virtuoso drumming and is one of the most extraordinary things on the records.

In recent years Cage has taken an enormous interest in chance as a principle of musical structure and has developed a technique for the creation of sonorous accidents which is at least as elaborate as the Schoenbergian system for the conjuring of the inevitable. This reaches its climax in the stupendous Concert for Piano and Orchestra, the newest work in the set and the one which was clearly the high point of the Town Hall concert. The piece has an absolutely epical, spine-tingling quality to it, rather like that of Varèse's orchestral works but less massive, and with an element of humor in its improvisation which Varèse never affords.

The pamphlet issued with the set contains a facsimile of part of the manuscript of each work, with comment on it by Cage himself. For the Concert for Piano and Orchestra two such pages are provided. One is the fifty-first page of the piano part; the other is one of twelve pages for the trombone player. Among a great many other things, we are told that the entire piano part contains sixty-three pages which may be performed in any order. The directions to the trombonist are even freer: "These pages may be played with or without other parts for other players. It is therefore a trombone solo or a part in an ensemble, symphony, or concert for piano and orchestra. Though there are twelve pages, any amount of them may be played (including none)." If the trom-

bonist decides to hop aboard the ensemble he is offered the opportunity to play with his spit-valve open, with his slide removed, with a glass jar replacing his bell, and so on; three different sizes of note-head are employed, relating either to duration or intensity as the player wishes. And so on. There is, I suspect, an element of *blague* in all this, but not much.

For me, the total effect of the set is to suggest primarily that Cage has a first-rate intellect, capable of analyzing and synthesizing ideas about music in an extremely brilliant fashion; but the music he writes in response to these ideas is sometimes not first-rate, and in none of it do I find anything like the creative pressure that lies behind the music of another New York indeterminist, Morton Feldman, whose first published recording was recently reviewed in this magazine. But there are some good pieces here, especially, for my money, the *Construction in*

Metal, *The Wonderful Widow of Eighteen Springs*, the vocalise called *She Is Asleep*, and the above-mentioned Concert for Piano and Orchestra. The sonatas and interludes for prepared piano are, to my taste, delightful in small doses but rather a bore in so big a dose as is provided here.

The only one of Cage's tape recorder pieces included is a short one called *Williams Mix*, which involves the montage of eight separate tapes according to the laws of chance. It is completely overshadowed by other works in the set, notably the prodigious Concert for Piano and Orchestra.

The recording is extremely good and makes excellent use of stereo for the very special effects the composer demands. The performers are among the best in New York. They include Cage himself as pianist and two other piano virtuosos—Maro Ajemian and David Tudor—as well as the contralto Arline Carmen and the Manhattan Percus-

sion Ensemble. The applause following each composition is recorded as well as the music, and the protest that arose during the Concert for Piano and Orchestra is clearly audible; it is quite in place, however, as part of the wonderful hullabaloo. After all, if the players are to do pretty much what they please, why shouldn't the audience join in?

The accompanying pamphlet is one of the finest ever issued. Record annotations could be distinguished additions to literature on music, but they seldom are. Avakian's is, and his booklet alone would be a welcome addition to any library shelf.

CAGE: *"The Twenty-Five-Year Retrospective Concert of the Music of John Cage"*

Arline Carmen, contralto; John Cage, Maro Ajemian, David Tudor, pianos; Manhattan Percussion Ensemble.

● ● GEORGE AVAKIAN. Three SD. \$25.

CLASSICAL

BACH: *Brandenburg Concertos* (complete)

Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, Szymon Goldberg, cond.

● ● EPIC BSC 105. Two SD. \$11.96.

To the surprising number of generally satisfying complete *Brandenburgs* on records, we must now add still another. Mr. Goldberg, who also plays the solo violin part in Nos. 1, 2, 4, and 5, and the first viola part in No. 6, conducts performances that are clean and brisk in the fast movements, flowing in the slow ones. His men respond with warmth as well as precision.

Flutes are used instead of recorders in Nos. 2 and 4, and an ordinary violin instead of a *violino piccolo* in No. 1, but otherwise even the most hard-bitten purist will find, I think, little to cavil at. If the trumpet in No. 2 is rather pinched and its intonation at times only approximate, the horns in No. 1 are crisp and always on pitch. Except for a moment or two in the first movement of No. 2, when the flute is covered, even the troublesome problem of balance is solved. No. 6 is played by a string sextet and a harpsichord. The result is perfect clarity, though some of us may prefer the dark richness obtained when there is more than one instrument to each part. The sound is first-rate. N.B.

BACH: *Partita No. 2, in C minor, S. 828; Concerto in F, S. 971 ("Italian"); Toccata and Fugue, in E minor, S. 914*

Robert Casadesus, piano.

● COLUMBIA ML 5446. LP. \$4.98.

● ● COLUMBIA MS 6120. SD. \$5.98.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 62.

BARTOK: *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta*

†Martin: *Petite symphonie concertante*

Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond.

● CAPITOL P 8507. LP. \$4.98.

● ● CAPITOL SP 8507. SD. \$5.98.

If ever a composition was made to order for stereophonic recording, it is Bartók's *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta*; yet this is its first stereo edition.

The score contains elaborate directions for the placement of the instruments on the stage. The spatial relationship of tones is one of the things with which Bartók was experimenting here; the position of the instruments to left and right and to front and back is of the essence of the work. The stereophonic recording does not simply enhance the total dimensionality of the sound, as it usually does; some sounds are reserved for one speaker and some for the other, thereby approximating Bartók's intention.

Frank Martin's symphony is also for a divided orchestra, and it has an extremely subtle solo group composed of harp, harpsichord, and piano. Here, too, stereophony has been used to approximate the composer's intentions with regard to sound-space, and rather more closely than in the Bartók.

In addition to the extremely interesting use of stereo, this recording is valuable because of Stokowski's magnificent interpretations. The mystery, majesty, and brilliance of the Bartók are beautifully dealt with, and the Martin is given a bigger thrust and finer line than I, for one, knew it possessed.

The record also has its deficiencies. The orchestra is a pickup group. It plays very well but not perfectly; there are slips in intonation, flawed attacks, and other evidences of haste. And although the recording realizes in its stereophonic version many qualities of both pieces which only stereophony can cope with, the sound is not of the best in other respects; the timbres of the instruments are not as well rendered as they

can be, and the balance of weight between them is sometimes faulty. A.F.

BEETHOVEN: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in C, Op. 15; No. 4, in G, Op. 58*

Robert Casadesus, piano; Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eduard van Beinum, cond.

● COLUMBIA ML 5437. LP. \$4.98.

● ● COLUMBIA MS 6111. SD. \$5.98.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 62.

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37*

Glenn Gould, piano; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein, cond.

● COLUMBIA ML 5418. LP. \$4.98.

● ● COLUMBIA MS 6096. SD. \$5.98.

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37; Rondo in C, Wo.O. 6*

Julius Katchen, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Pierino Gamba, cond.

● ● LONDON CS 6096. SD. \$4.98.

The sleeper here is the Rondo of 1795 (contemporary with Op. 4) which Katchen uses as a preface for the concerto. It is one of the most appealing examples of youthful Beethoven—he was twenty-five when it was written—and a gratifying bonus.

Katchen has better recording and in the Concerto an accompaniment superior to that provided Gould, although the Gould set has a stronger sense of stereo directionality. Moreover, the Katchen performance has firm, bright playing and a lively finale.

Gould's execution of the solo part consistently goes beyond Katchen's to provide a more interesting and moving statement of the music, and this, surely, ought to be the making of the Columbia set. I am troubled, however, by the insensitive—even crude—features of Bernstein's treatment of the instrumental lines as well as by the washed-out

quality of the orchestral sound with its *ersatz* resonance only too conspicuous. The Gould set is full of incidental noises, the worst of which is a fine stereo cough during a flute solo in the second movement. These failings are about the same in both the stereo and mono versions of the set.

For a stereo Third, I continue to recommend the Backhaus edition, which is without the faults of either of these. But both the Rondo offered by Katchen and Gould's performance, despite its setting, deserve consideration if the composer is of particular interest to you. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 7, in D, Op. 10, No. 3; No. 23, in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata")*

Vladimir Horowitz, piano.

● RCA VICTOR LM 2366. LP. \$4.98.

● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2366. SD. \$5.98.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 61.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67; Fidelio, Op. 72: Overture*

Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Eugen Jochum, cond.

● ● DECCA DGS 712028. SD. \$5.98.

Here, finally, is a stereo Fifth which can be regarded as competitive in every sense with the best of the monophonic editions. Jochum's performance is an excellent one on all counts, offering the breadth and strength of the German tradition without bombast or pedantry. The first movement repeat is observed, but so are a great many other niceties that mark the distinguished performance from the superficial approach to this music. If you play the recording with the score, you will see what I mean.

The engineering is quite up to the level of the performance, providing a richly multidimensional ensemble quality that grows impressively for the climactic passages but can sustain with unusual effect the quiet pages leading to the final movement. No new Fiftys should be needed for some time to come. R.C.M.

BLOCH: *Concerto Grosso for Strings and Piano; Concerto Grosso for Strings*

Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra, Howard Hanson, cond.

● ● MERCURY SR 90223. SD. \$4.98.

Everybody knows Bloch's first concerto grosso. It was one of the most famous pieces of the 1920s, one of the outstanding examples of that period's neoclassicism, and one of the works that established Bloch's reputation throughout the world. Few people seem to know, however, that he wrote a second concerto grosso in 1952. This one is for strings alone, with a Corelli-like contrast of a solo group against the full ensemble. If possible, it is an even finer piece than Concerto Grosso No. 1. Bloch's music underwent a certain concentration and clarification in the last years of his life, and during this period he produced several masterpieces which the world at large has yet to discover. It will not be long in discovering the second concerto grosso, however, thanks to Hanson's superb performance and Mercury's magnificent recording. A.F.

BOCCHERINI: *Concerto for Cello and Strings, in B flat*

† Vivaldi: *Concerto for Cello and Strings, in D*

† Vivaldi-Bach: *Concerto for Cello and Strings, in G*

Antonio Janigro, cello; Solisti di Zagreb.

● RCA VICTOR LM 2365. LP. \$4.98.

● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2365. SD. \$5.98.

To readers who are interested primarily in first-rate cello playing this disc can be warmly recommended. Janigro has a ravishingly beautiful tone, he seldom scrapes, and

he performs with both dash and feeling.

To readers interested in authentic Boccherini and Vivaldi this disc cannot be recommended at all. The literature for cello and string orchestra is no doubt sparse, but it seems unfortunate that a performing group of this high caliber had to descend to nineteenth-century, souped-up arrangements of eighteenth-century music. The familiar Boccherini concerto has been shown to be largely the product of its arranger, Friedrich Grützmacher, who shifted the composer's material about with great abandon, sweetened the accompani-

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Rubinstein: even a great artist grows.

ment à la Mendelssohn, and substituted an entirely different slow movement for the original. I was unable to find the Vivaldi Concerto in D in Pincherle's catalogue, and suspect from its sound that it too was metamorphosed somewhat by its arranger, one Dandelot. As for the "Vivaldi-Bach," it has nothing to do with Vivaldi and little enough with Bach. Its source is a concerto by Duke Johann Ernst of Saxe-Weimar, which was transcribed by Bach for organ solo. It was presumably from the Bach version that a certain Keleman made the present retranscription. N.B.

CAGE: *"The Twenty-Five Year Retrospective Concert of the Music of John Cage"*

Arline Carmen, contralto; John Cage, Maro Ajemian, David Tudor, pianos; Manhattan Percussion Ensemble.

● ● GEORGE AVAKIAN. Three SD. \$25.

For a feature review of this album, see page 63.

CASADESUS: *Sextuor for Piano, Woodwinds, and French Horn, Op. 58; Nocturno for Piano, Woodwinds, and String Quartet, Op. 45*

Robert Casadesus, piano.

● COLUMBIA ML 5448. LP. \$4.98.

● ● COLUMBIA MS 6121. SD. \$5.98.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 62.

CHOPIN: *Scherzos {4}*

Artur Rubinstein, piano.

● RCA VICTOR LM 2368. LP. \$4.98.

If ever proof were needed that a great artist continues to grow, here it is. And if it seemed doubtful that any recording of the Chopin scherzos would surpass Rubinstein's earlier version, his new one does. There are no major or basic changes in the pianist's interpretation, but there is more breadth and depth in handling of detail. If the lyrical elements become mellower and more singing, the dramatic elements become more powerful and striking. Comparison of the opening

of the B flat Minor Scherzo in the two instances points this up, for in the later version the pauses are just a shade longer, increasing the musical tension and drama. Yet there is no sense of calculation in this; actually the newer concept sounds the more natural, and the playing has the same spontaneity, the same brilliance, drive, and elegance as before. The process of minute change is repeated throughout the recording, producing performances more heroic and richer than ever. Sonically, of course, the new disc is much brighter, and surface noise no longer plagues the listener. R.E.

DVORAK: *Slavonic Dances, Op. 46; Slavonic Dances, Op. 72*

Alfred Brendel and Walter Kuen, piano four-hands.

● Vox PL 11620. LP. \$4.98.

As far as I am able to ascertain, this is the first time that all sixteen *Slavonic Dances* have ever been recorded in the composer's original version for piano duet (it was only later that Dvořák arranged them for orchestra). Brendel and Kuen play these delightful miniatures with a real flair, as if they were enjoying themselves. They manage to put plenty of verve into their performance without any of the hammering that too often results when two pianists sit down at one keyboard. They also manage to get all sixteen dances onto one disc without rushing, though, as might be expected, there are no bands separating the individual dances. The recorded sound is adequate. P.A.

HANDEL: *Concertos for Organ and Orchestra: Nos. 13-16*

E. Power Biggs, organ; London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond.

● COLUMBIA M2L 267. Two LP. \$9.96.

● ● COLUMBIA M2S 611. Two SD. \$11.96.

These four works, with which Mr. Biggs completes his traversal of Handel's organ concertos, are largely transcriptions from other pieces of his. While they do not, on the whole, attain the level of the six concertos of Op. 4 or the six of Op. 7, they are by no means devoid of interest. The first Allegro of No. 13 (in F, sometimes known as "The Cuckoo and the Nightingale" because of the bird calls in this movement) is cheery and pleasant, and the last Allegro has a delightful verve. The finale of No. 14 is as British as Yorkshire pudding. No. 16 is a big work in six movements with woodwinds and horns. In the second movement there is some lively dialoguing between the winds and the organ. Also presented here are six little fugues for organ, whose authenticity has been a matter of controversy. Whichever way the verdict goes, it will not affect Handel's standing in the least. As in the other volumes of this series, performance and recording are absolutely first-class. N.B.

HAYDN: *Symphonies: No. 85, in B flat {"La Reine"}; No. 101, in D {"Clock"}*

Bamberg Symphony, Joseph Keilberth, cond.

● ● TELEFUNKEN TCS 18014. SD. \$2.98.

The first stereo appearance of No. 85 is more than adequate excuse for investing \$2.98 in

this disc, since the work is among the best of the master's pre-London symphonies. Keilberth offers a secure German Haydn style with room for the strong melodic features of this score to find realization.

In the *Clock* you will find none of the wonders Toscanini brought from this music, but the performance remains a good one. Unfortunately, it is somewhat thin and wiry compared to the pleasantly refined sound of the earlier work. Stereo effects are good in both cases, however. R.C.M.

KODALY: *Háry János, Op. 15: Orchestral Suite—See Prokofiev: Lieutenant Kije: Suite, Op. 60.*

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 4, in G*

Lisa Della Casa, soprano; Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.

● RCA VICTOR LM 2364. LP. \$4.98.

● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2364. SD. \$5.98.

The distinctive sound of the Chicago Symphony under the Reiner baton, the firm clean registration of instrumental lines to form a composite of strong and sumptuous tonal values, has rarely been captured with complete success in its recordings. It is pleasing to find, therefore, that the Mahler Fourth—a work in which these ensemble qualities are essential—exhibits them as effectively on both monophonic and stereo discs as it did in concert.

The Mahler Fourth is really a pastoral symphony, but its landscape is no placid scene but a stage on which angels and devils contest for men's hearts. Its atmosphere thus goes all the way back to Weber's *Der Freischütz*, although Mahler infuses elements of Austrian folklore, which in this work and its immediate predecessor he draws upon more deeply than in any of his other scores.

Once you hear any Mahler work in stereo you realize, I think, that no monophonic account can do it justice. There are several good monophonic Fourth's still in the catalogue, among them the lovely old Walter version. Reiner's approach is somewhat cooler than you may expect, and in the final movement, particularly, recollection of Walter's sensitivity may cause a moment's doubt of the present interpretation. But this is a fine performance with integrity and conviction in its own terms, and with rehearing you will come to admire both its concept and execution. R.C.M.

MARTIN: *Petite symphonie concertante—See Bartók: Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta.*

MOZART: *Serenades for Winds: No. 11, in E flat, K. 375; No. 12, in C minor, K. 388*

Everest Woodwind Octet, Newell Jenkins, cond.

● EVEREST LPBR 6042. LP. \$4.40.

● ● EVEREST SDBR 3042. SD. \$4.40.

It would be hard to imagine that two works written by the same composer within a few months for the same combination of instruments could be so different. K. 375 is pure entertainment music, singing away as though

Continued on page 68

EIGHT NEW BEETHOVEN RELEASES FROM

EPIC

Symphony No. 9 in D Minor ("Choral");
Symphony No. 1 in C Major. Ingeborg
Wenglor, Ursula Zollenkopf, Hans-
Joachim Rotzsch, Theo Adam, with the
Leipzig Broadcasting Chorus and the
Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Franz
Konwitschny, Conductor.
SC 6036 BSC 107 (Stereorama)

Symphony No. 6 in F Major ("Pastor-
ale"). The Vienna Symphony Orchestra,
Antal Dorati, Conductor.
LC 3611 BC 1038 (Stereorama)

Symphony No. 7 in A Major. The Clevel-
and Orchestra, George Szell, Conductor.
LC 3658 BC 1066 (Stereorama)

Symphony No. 2 in D Major; Overture
to "The Creatures of Prometheus." The
Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Franz
Konwitschny, Conductor.
LC 3634 BC 1052 (Stereorama)

Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major. Leon
Fleisher, Pianist, with the Cleveland
Orchestra, George Szell, Conductor.
(With Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 25.)
LC 3574 BC 1025 (Stereorama)

Symphony No. 5 in C Minor; Symphony
No. 8 in F Major. Orchestre des Con-
certs Lamoureux, Igor Markevitch,
Conductor.
LC 3659 BC 1067 (Stereorama)

Symphony No. 8 in F Major. Hague
Philharmonic Orchestra, Willem Van
Otterloo, Conductor. (With Schubert's
"Unfinished" Symphony.)
LC 3642 BC 1059 (Stereorama)

"Moonlight," "Appassionata," and
"Pathetique" Sonatas. Hans Richter-
Haaser, Pianist. LC 3590

ALSO AVAILABLE ON EPIC RECORDS...

Symphonies

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major ("Eroica"). The Cleveland Orches-
tra, George Szell, Conductor. LC 3385 BC 1001 (Stereorama)

Symphony No. 5 in C Minor. The Cleveland Orchestra, George
Szell, Conductor. (With Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony.)
LC 3195

Symphony No. 2 in D Major. The Concertgebouw Orchestra of
Amsterdam, Eduard Van Beinum, Conductor. (With Nicolai's
"Merry Wives of Windsor" Overture.) LC 3466

Concertos

Violin Concerto in D Major. Arthur Grumiaux, Violinist, with the
Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, Eduard Van Beinum,
Conductor. LC 3420

Piano Concerto No. 1 in C Major; Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat
Major. Cor De Groot, Pianist, with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra,
Willem Van Otterloo, Conductor. LC 3434

Piano Concerto No. 5 in E-flat Major ("Emperor"). Cor De Groot,
Pianist, with the Hague Philharmonic Orchestra, Willem Van
Otterloo, Conductor. LC 3014

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Sonatas for Violin and Piano (Complete). Arthur Grumiaux, Violin-
ist, and Clara Haskil, Pianist.
SC 6030 (4-12")
(Also available singly)

"Hammerklavier" and "Les Adieux" Sonatas. Eduardo Del Pueyo,
Pianist. LC 3555

Ballet

The Creatures of Prometheus (Complete). The Hague Philhar-
monic Orchestra, Willem Van Otterloo, Conductor. LC 3366

ADDITIONAL APRIL RELEASES FROM EPIC

BERLIOZ: Symphonie Fantastique. Hague Philharmonic Orches-
tra, Willem Van Otterloo, Conductor.
LC 3665 BC 1068 (Stereorama)

DEBUSSY: Sonata No. 3 in G Minor for Violin and Piano. • LEKEU:
Sonata in G Major for Violin and Piano. Arthur Grumiaux, Violinist,
and Riccardo Castagnone, Pianist. LC 3667

MILHAUD: The Four Seasons. Darius Milhaud conducting the
Ensemble de Soloistes des Concerts Lamoureux.
LC 3666 BC 1069 (Stereorama)

RAVEL: Gaspard de la Nuit; Le Tombeau de Couperin. Charles
Rosen, Pianist. LC 3589

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its composer had not a care in the world. With the first notes of K. 388, however, we plunge into the dark recesses of Mozart's soul, and we do not come out into the sunlight until the last movement. It remains one of the mysteries of the creative mind that Mozart, tossing off a work in a great hurry for the house band of some Viennese nobleman, should have written one of his most powerful and passionate compositions. The playing here is impeccable, as regards precision, intonation, and technical security. Those readers who, as I did, first got to know and love the C minor Serenade through the fine RCA Victor recording made many years ago with members of the Boston Symphony will find no radical departures here from the tempos and general spirit of that set. It seems to me that Jenkins should have achieved more contrast between *piano* and *forte* (the *piano* is seldom soft enough), and that the dissonant suspensions of the Minuet of K. 388 could have had more bite, but otherwise the performance struck me as excellent, as did the sound in both versions. N.B.

PROKOFIEV: *Lieutenant Kije: Suite*, Op. 60

†**Kodály:** *Háry János, Op. 15: Orchestral Suite*

Dan Iordachescu, baritone (in the Prokofiev); Philharmonia Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond.

● **CAPITOL P 8508.** LP. \$4.98.

● ● **CAPITOL SP 8508.** SD. \$5.98.

This seems to be the only one of the nine recorded versions of the suite from *Lieutenant Kije* to present the two songs as songs and not as instrumental pieces. That is a good reason for calling it to your attention. There is also a good reason for recommending it: this is perhaps the wittiest, lightest, most sensitive, musicianly, and thoroughly delightful *Kije* of the lot, baritone or no baritone. The *Háry János* on the other side is equally fine, and the recording of both is superb. The stereo edition is particularly brilliant. A.F.



Richter: Schubert warm and sunny.

RAVEL: *Ma Mère l'Oye; La Valse; Mirrors: No. 4, Alborada del gracioso*

Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe, pianos.

● **CAPITOL P 8513.** LP. \$4.98.

● ● **CAPITOL SP 8513.** SD. \$5.98.

These exceptionally tasteful and attractive performances should give considerable pleasure, even though the works are more colorful in their well-known orchestral dress. The *Mother Goose Suite* has more poignancy and childlike innocence in the original four-hand version; Whittemore and Lowe's arrangement of the *Alborada del gracioso* does little more than divide the problems that make this work so difficult for a solo pianist to bring off satisfactorily; and Ravel's own transcription for two pianos of *La Valse* is a superb example of transferring effects from one medium to another. Whittemore and Lowe take the first and last movements of the Suite too slowly for my taste, but everywhere else they play most sensitively, with beautiful tone and balance, and a fine sense of drama and color in *La Valse*. The piano tone on the monophonic disc is pure and round. The stereo version lets it blossom out naturally, and the two pianos have a more separated sound, although the final effect is perfectly blended. *La Valse*, particularly, profits from the more spacious treatment that stereo can give. R.E.

SARASATE: *Zigeunerweisen; Carmen Fantasy*—See Sibelius: *Six Humoresques for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 87 and Op. 89.*

SCHUBERT: *Sonata for Piano, No. 17, in D, Op. 53*

Sviatoslav Richter, piano.

● **MONITOR MC 2043.** LP. \$4.98.

It takes a true virtuoso to bring off some of the seemingly simple piano pieces, and Richter does just that for this Schubert sonata in one of the most enchanting records I have ever heard. C. G. Burke once referred to this work as "rather crazy," and one must agree that an oddly giddy quality pervades it, with its naively happy tunes, its rushing about, its perverse rhythms. But only a lyric genius could write it, and only a virtuoso of the first order could reveal it for the buoyant masterpiece it is.

In observing scrupulously all the markings in the score—and thereby making all its effects—Richter must at high speed sustain transparent, feathery textures, contrast voices of piano and pianissimo strength, make long decrescendos from the piano level, play soft repeated chords, bring out an inner melody in thirds. He does this in such an effortless manner that one's immediate reaction is how wonderfully warm and sunny the music is and how "heavenly" is its "length." Only later does the realization develop of what extraordinary technical triumphs the pianist has achieved. R.E.

SCHUETZ: *Geistliche Chormusik: 14 Motets*

Norddeutscher Singkreis, Gottfried Wolters, cond.

● **ARCHIVE ARC 3122.** LP. \$5.98.

● ● **ARCHIVE ARC 73122.** SD. \$6.98.

SCHUETZ: *Music of Heinrich Schütz*

Singers and Instrumentalists of the Monday Evening Concerts of Los Angeles, Robert Craft, cond.

● **COLUMBIA ML 5411.** LP. \$4.98.

● ● **COLUMBIA MS 6088.** SD. \$5.98.

The Archive disc offers about half of the collection of motets published by Schütz in 1648 as *Geistliche Chormusik* (Religious Choral Music). Included here is the marvelously beautiful *Selig sind die Toten*, which readers may remember from its fine performance under Paul Sacher in the *Anthologie Sonore*. Many of the other pieces are almost on the same level, and one, *Das ist je gewisslich wahr*, with its supple lines and contrasts and chordal peroration, is a particular gem. The chorus is not too large (forty-two singers) and performs with good tone and intonation, clear enunciation, and just balances. Wolters has a way of playing down rhetorical effects and occasionally gliding right over caesuras, but in general these are highly satisfactory performances.

With the Columbia disc we are made aware of performance problems. Craft had the boldness to venture on territory that has been hardly explored on records—Schütz's music for voices and instruments; and if we are not convinced that he has solved the problems in every case, we must give him credit for courage. He presents eight pieces from various publications by Schütz, six with Latin texts and two with German. Among them is the splendid and elaborate motet *Es ging ein Sämman aus*, in which the four verses are sung by a quartet of solo voices accompanied by a few instruments, and after each verse there is a refrain in which a chorus and four trombones join the performers already mentioned. It seems to me that there is in all these performances a detachment, a coolness, that casts a veil over the expressive qualities of the music, an effect that is not improved by the unimaginative realization of the continuo. The attempts to introduce unwritten dotted rhythms, as in *Attendite, popule meus* and *Fili mi, Absalon*, do not come off. They may or may not be historically justified in this music, but they sound awkward on the trombones, though they might not sound that way on the violins that Schütz specified as alternative instruments. Clinching proof, it seems to me, that these rhythms are wrong as used here occurs when the trombone phrase so treated in *Attendite* turns up in the voice, which instead of singing "*propositiones*" in smooth, even syllables is made to sing "pro-po-si-ti . . .," with the first and third syllables shortened and the second and fourth lengthened, a distortion impossible to attribute to Schütz, one of the most sensitive prosodists among composers.

First-rate recording in both versions of each disc. N.B.

SIBELIUS: *Six Humoresques for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 87 and Op. 89.*

†**Sarasate:** *Zigeunerweisen; Carmen Fantasy*

†**Tchaikovsky:** *Sérénade mélancolique, in B flat minor, Op. 26*

Aaron Rosand, violin; Symphony Orchestra

Continued on page 70

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CIRCLE 73 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

of the Southwest German Radio (Baden-Baden), Tibor Szöke, cond.

● Vox PL 11600. LP. \$4.98.

● ● Vox STPL 11600. SD. \$5.95.

The only violin work of Sibelius ever heard with any degree of frequency is the virtuosic Concerto in D minor. But the composer was an accomplished violinist, and his catalogue includes a number of smaller works for the instrument. The six *Humoresques*—two in Op. 87 and four in Op. 89—which date from 1917, here receive their recording debut. It is most pleasant to make their acquaintance. As their name implies, they are short and light. Within the small framework, however, Sibelius has managed to crowd some colorful writing for the soloist, though he has left the orchestra fairly much in the background. His musical statements are typically Sibelian though more lyrical than usual in their melodic contour—brief and to the point, with almost abrupt endings.

Rosand's playing of the Sibelius pieces, as well as of the popular Sarasate and Tchaikovsky works, is clear, brilliant, and free of mannerisms, and he invests the music with a great deal of interpretative fire. Of particular note are his crystalline harmonics in the fifth *Humoresque* and his clean double-stopping in the *Danse Bohème* of the *Carmen Fantasy*. Szöke's orchestral accompaniments are most sympathetic and well performed. Vox's reproduction, both in mono and stereo, is among the finest to come from that company; the balance between soloist and orchestra, however, is better in the two-channel version. P.A.

STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Ein Heldenleben*, Op. 40

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

● ● DECCA DGS 712022. SD. \$5.98.

Von Karajan's new policy of free-lance recording now brings him before the public on still another label with his Berlin orchestra. This performance of *Heldenleben* is very close to the *Zarathustra* recently issued from his Vienna sessions. The ensemble is very lush and gorgeous, with episodes of rhapsodic sensuality given prominence and the militant aspects of the score underplayed.

The stereo competition on discs is Leopold Ludwig's version on Everest. If the issue is to be decided on the basis of sound, the Ludwig is a more striking production. The Berlin Philharmonic, however, is a far better orchestra than the London Symphony, and considerably more at home in the Straussian idiom. If you will trade the intimacy of the stage for first balcony sound and some softening of detail, the Von Karajan performance is one of greater musical interest. R.C.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*, in D, Op. 35

Henryk Szeryng, violin; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.

● RCA VICTOR LM 2363. LP. \$4.98.

● ● RCA VICTOR LSC 2363. SD. \$5.98.

This is Russian music by a Polish violinist and a French conductor. The results are notably satisfying.

Szeryng is able to give the Slavic elements

of the music a sympathetic stylistic treatment, but he does so with artistry and an unfailing sense of proportion. Munch is one of the best accompanists in the business, and although he knows exactly the sounds Tchaikovsky requires, his Gallic sensitivity to texture and line produces that sound with an ensemble quality free from impurities.

Although there are already two or three satisfactory stereo accounts of this music in Schwann, none of them could be called a perfect recording by any standards, and the Szeryng could well become the dominant edition. The engineers have provided a richly colored violin sound that offers strong presence, and the Boston orchestra brings equally robust colors and sonorities to its role. In the loudest passages of the stereo edition there are moments of coarsened tone which you will not find in their LP counterparts, but in general both versions are satisfactory examples of their type. R.C.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Sérénade mélancolique*, in B flat minor, Op. 26—See Sibelius: *Six Humoresques for Violin and Orchestra*, Op. 87 and Op. 89.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Swan Lake*, Op. 20: *Orchestral Suite*. *The Sleeping Beauty*, Op. 66: *Orchestral Suite*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

● ANGEL 35740. LP. \$4.98.

● ● ANGEL S 35740. SD. \$5.98.

Karajan's sharp-minded brilliance as a conductor, the Philharmonia's superb playing, and the warm massive sound of the recordings combine to make excellent concert versions of these ballet suites, although they are not relaxed and pliant enough for the balletomane. The suites are virtually—but not quite—standard in content. From *Swan Lake*—Scene (Swan Theme); Waltz from Act I; Dance of the Little Swans; Introduction to Scene and Second Dance of the Swan Queen; Czardas from Act III. From *Sleeping Beauty*—Introduction and Lilac Fairy; Adagio from Act I; Puss in Boots from Act III; Panorama, Act II; Valse, Act I. R.E.



Foyer, Vienna

Nilsson: an Isolde of the first rank.

VIVALDI: *Concerto for Cello and Strings*, in D—See Boccherini: *Concerto for Cello and Strings*, in B flat.

VIVALDI: *Concertos: for Two Oboes and Strings*, in D minor, P. 302; for Oboe, Bassoon, and Strings, in G, P. 129; for Two Oboes, Two Clarinets, and Strings, in C, P. 74; for Two Oboes, Two Clarinets, and Strings, in C, P. 73

Gli Accademici di Milano, Piero Santi, cond.

● Vox DL 450. LP. \$5.95.

● ● Vox STDL 500450. SD. \$5.95.

Except for P. 74, these seem to be new to microgroove. If the two Concertos in C were indeed intended for clarinets—and a pretty good case has been made for this—they may be among the earliest orchestral works to employ that instrument, which was invented about 1700. But the two works have values in addition to historical considerations. Both have a good deal of rhythmic vivacity, and the Largo of P. 74 is an interesting study in tone color, being written for the four woodwinds alone. P. 302 has some rather striking themes—solemn strides in the opening Largo, and a strong unison figure in the last movement. The performance is acceptable as far as the orchestra is concerned, and the soloists, especially Virginio Bianchi, the bassoonist in P. 129, are good, although the first oboe is rather unsteady in the second Largo of P. 302. N.B.

VIVALDI-BACH: *Concerto for Cello and Strings*, in G—See Boccherini: *Concerto for Cello and Strings*, in B flat.

WAGNER: *Tristan und Isolde: Prelude and Liebestod; Isolde's Narrative and Curse*

Birgit Nilsson, soprano; Grace Hoffmann, contralto; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Knappertsbusch, cond.

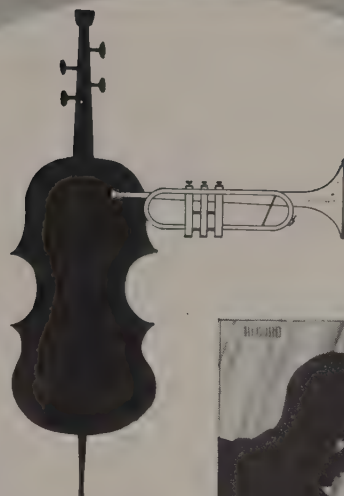
● ● LONDON OS 25138. SD. \$5.98.

The quality of Birgit Nilsson's voice is admirably suited to Isolde, and she sings with intelligence and temperament. She does not seem to me to have quite the comprehension that Flagstad brought to her singing of the *Liebestod*—I am speaking now not of textual comprehension, but musical comprehension, the sense of guiding one note into the next in a perfect blending—and I am referring to Flagstad's postwar recording under Furtwängler more than to her earlier 78 versions. But that Nilsson's Isolde should be seriously compared with Flagstad's at all indicates singing of the highest order. The long Act I passage could hardly be better, particularly from the Curse to the end of the scene. Here Nilsson summons a compact tone of great force, capped by thrilling tones above the staff, and Grace Hoffmann copes well with Brangäne's brief but demanding lines.

Knappertsbusch and the orchestra are magnificent, and the broad stereo sound allows the music really to engulf the listener. The Prelude and *Liebestod* are on one side, the Narrative and Curse on the other, but a separating band allows one to play the music in its proper sequence. C.L.O.

Continued on page 72

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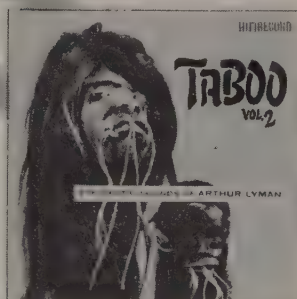
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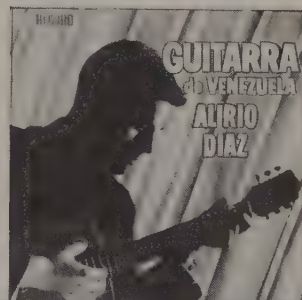
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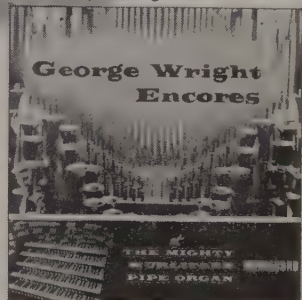
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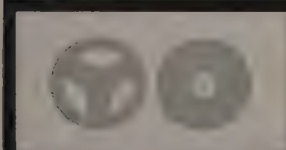


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RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

TERESA BERGANZA: *Rossini Program*

Teresa Berganza, mezzo; London Symphony Orchestra, Alexander Gibson, cond.

● ● LONDON OS 25106. SD. \$5.98.

Present-day mezzos who wish to climb to the highest rung of the operatic ladder must stand comparison with Giulietta Simionato—especially if they sing Rossini. I do not know how large Berganza's voice is—to judge by this record, it is more distinguished by resonant carrying properties than by sheer caliber—and I suspect that it is not yet suited to Verdi's Amneris or Azucena. When it comes to Rossini, though, this very young artist is already astonishingly accomplished. Her facility at vocal embellishment is superior to Simionato's (Berganza always maintains a legato line in even the widest-ranging runs); she is steady at all points over a very wide compass; her tone has a fine bloom; she commands a whole spectrum of colors and dynamics; and she brings delightful awareness to her characterizations. She is equally at home in the fiendish *Cenerentola* finale (the best I've ever heard) and in the long, sweeping line of "*Fac ut portem*" from the *Stabat Mater*. I can see no obstacle to a long and brilliant career for this singer.

The accompaniments are clear and firm, and London's stereo sound is bright and full. I recommend this record without qualification.

C.L.O.

LOUIS DE FROMENT: "*Musique Française du XVIIIème*"

Sohier: *Symphony in A, Op. 2, No. 3*. Le Duc: *Symphony in D*. Bertheaume: *Symphonie concertante for Two Violins and Orchestra, in G, Op. 6, No. 1*. Gossec: *Rondo for Flute, Violin, Harp, and Orchestra, in D*.

Pierre Doukau, Robert Gendre, violins; Jean-Pierre Rampal, flute; Lily Laskine, harp; Orchestre de Chambre Louis de Froment, Louis de Froment, cond.

● PATHE DTX 230. LP. \$5.95.

Pathé continues to explore the little-known and highly interesting world of the French symphony in the classical period. After having recently given us symphonies by Méhul and Le Duc, it now offers symphonic works by the same Le Duc and some of his compatriots. Not much is known of Charles Sohier (1728–59), who was born and died at Lille and spent some time in Paris. His symphony, though for its time "modern" in pattern (it is in the four movements that were to become customary), is still baroque in general style, so much so that the absence of a harpsichord is noticeable, especially in the rather poetic Andante and in the Minuet. The symphony by Simon Le Duc (1748–77) has more personality than the one in the same key previously presented by Pathé. This one has lively and pleasing ideas in the first movement, its Andante is a tender song, and it has a light, gay finale. The work by Isidore Bertheaume (1752–1802) is more notable for the attractiveness of the material and the elegance

and smoothness with which it is handled than for originality. Finally, in the Rondo by the celebrated and long-lived Gossec (1734–1829), we observe a better-than-average musical mind juggling instrumental patterns and colors with all the joy, if with less than the genius, of a Haydn. Good performances, as far as one can judge without the scores, and good sound.

N.B.

TOSHIYA ETO: *Violin Recital*

Tartini: *Sonatas for Violin and Piano: in G minor ("Devil's Trill"); in G minor ("Didone abbandonata")*. Vivaldi: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, in A, Op. 2, No. 2*. Corelli: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, in C, Op. 5, No. 3*.

Toshiya Eto, violin; Vladimir Sokoloff, piano.

● ● DECCA DL 710014. SD. \$5.98.

Mr. Eto is a Japanese violinist who has studied in his native land and at the Curtis Institute, where he now teaches. To judge by this, his first recording, he produces a lovely, singing tone which is never permitted to become smeary, his fingers are nimble and accurate, his double stops clean, his phrasing musical and in good taste. This is not the kind of program that encourages a projection of individuality, and further appraisal will have to wait until he records other types of music; but there are enough good qualities evident in this performance to warrant our saying: Welcome, Mr. Eto.

N.B.

DIETRICH FISCHER-DIESKAU: *Schubert Songs, Album Two*

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Karl Engel, piano.

● ANGEL 35656. LP. \$4.98.

For me, at least, Fischer-Dieskau is the best Lieder singer now before the public, and one of the supreme vocal artists of the century. I know of no other singer—even among the recorded giants of bygone times—who could command such a wide range of vocal colors, or could apply them with such imagination to the illumination of text and notes. He communicates with his voice—communi-

cates each nuance with precision and passion. The mixture is, I know, too rich for some, and they turn to interpretations of "good taste" and "restraint" by artists who are so tasteful and restrained only because they cannot call upon the resources of a Fischer-Dieskau.

On this record, the baritone applies his gifts to some out-of-the-way Schubert. Side 1 is very satisfying. *Gruppe aus dem Tartarus*, a powerful poem in a magnificent setting, becomes a terrifying evocation of unending anguish, and in the next song (*Die Götter Griechenlands*) Fischer-Dieskau's seamless legato and delicate pianissimo shading convey the bland, distant Hellenic feeling. *Die Erwartung und Sehnsucht* are also interesting, and interestingly done. Unhappily, the reverse of the record is likely to please Schubert scholars only. The entire side is occupied by a windy, futile ballad called *Der Taucher*, concerning a young man who twice dives into a whirlpool to retrieve a goblet (the second time, of course, he does not return). It is boring stuff, and Fischer-Dieskau's energetic dramatization merely underlines the emptiness of the material. Engel's accompaniments are irreproachable, as is Angel's sound.

C.L.O.

VICENTE GOMEZ: "*The Artistry of Vicente Gomez*"

Vicente Gomez, guitar.

● DECCA DL 8965. LP. \$3.98.

● ● DECCA DL 78965. SD. \$4.98.

Gomez is a highly accomplished artist with a long-standing reputation. Here he exhibits technical command and atmospheric style, while trying to make the best of two possible worlds—that of the classical guitar, that of flamenco music—and having the best of neither. Furthermore, a tendency to sentimentalize or soften the music dilutes its power. One expects Paganini's Sonatina to be more sunny; the Milan, Sor, and Bach pieces to be more austere rhythmically; the two Villa Lobos Preludios to have more flash. On the other side, works by Gomez himself attempt to incorporate the flamenco style; they only water down its primitive vigor. The lively, tricky *Guajiras*, a Cuban serenade, is the most effective of these compromises, combining as it does Cuban and flamenco rhythms. It may or may not be significant that some of these pieces were written for Hollywood films. The recording is lifelike, and so close to the instrument that it magnifies all the little clicks and scratchings common to guitar playing. Stereo is an advantage in enhancing and rounding out the sound of the instrument.

R.E.

KRAINIS RECORDER CONSORT: "*The Festive Pipes; Five Centuries of Dance Music for Recorders*"

Krainis Recorder Ensemble.

● KAPP KCL 9034. LP. \$4.98.

Fanciers of that sublimated whistle called the recorder or vertical flute will find a tasty little program spread out for them here. The music, ranging from the thirteenth century to the eighteenth, is cleverly chosen to present various styles, textures, and rhythms, many of the pieces are enlivened by the judicious addition of a drum or tam-



Toshiya Eto: violinist of singing tone.

bourine or set of bells, and all are well performed by this knowledgeable group of five recorder players plus a percussionist. Most of the pieces are anonymous — among these the suite of sixteenth-century Italian dances struck me as a particularly delightful set—while the composers named include such masters as Dowland and Scheidt. Although the bass and “great bass” recorders do not project as well as they might, balance is generally satisfactory, as is intonation. N.B.

AASE NORDMO-LOEBERG: Wagner and Verdi Program

Aase Nordmo-Löberg, soprano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Walter Susskind and Warwick Braithwaite, conds.

- ANGEL 35715. LP. \$4.98.
- ● ANGEL S35715. SD. \$5.98.

For sheer beauty of sound, Nordmo-Löberg's soprano has few rivals today. Since her round, clear voice also has size and range, she obviously has the equipment to move to the fore among international singers. Still, trained listeners nearly always qualify their approval of her singing; they point out that she seems beset by a certain reticence or coldness. I should say that the difficulty is not temperamental, but vocal. While her voice is produced evenly, it is not quite free—there is a weightiness and a “slowness” about her singing, caused, I think, by inability (not unwillingness) to cut loose vocally.

This problem is overcome at least part of the time on this recital, and the excerpts from *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin* are very gratifying indeed. “*Du bist der Lenz*,” however, refuses to catch fire, and Verdi does not fare well. The *Otello* scene stands perfectly still as the singer picks her way from note to note. “*Tu che le vanità*” from *Don Carlos* is somewhat better (here she lets her voice out more fully), but the Italian manner does not come naturally to Mme. Löberg. Her Verdi offerings are not helped by the fussy, ponderous conducting of Braithwaite.

The stereo version carries with it some *précécho*, and for this reason I prefer the monophonic pressing. C.L.O.

CONSTANTIN SILVESTRI: “Rhapsodies for Orchestra”

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Constantin Silvestri, cond.

- ANGEL 35677. LP. \$4.98.
- ● ANGEL S 35677. SD. \$5.98.

At last Constantin Silvestri has found the right outlet for his interpretative talents! Up to now, many of his readings have been exciting and colorful, but they have also strayed too far from the printed scores. Evidently, these rhapsodies are more suited to his style, or he to theirs; his performances here are loaded with vibrancy, yet they keep within the fairly loose boundaries imposed by the music. He is particularly at home in Enesco's *Rumanian Rhapsody* No. 1, whose spirit he animates in telling, even thrilling fashion. Liszt's *Fourth Hungarian Rhapsody*, too, has a lot of paprika in it, while Ravel's *Rapsodie espagnole* is marked by the proper blend of quiet atmosphere and festive fire. The conductor draws some superior playing from the Vienna Philharmonic, which has been brightly recorded by Angel, a bit more sparsely, of course, in stereo. P.A.

ROGER VOISIN and JOHN RHEA: Music for Trumpet and Orchestra, Vol. 2

Vivaldi: *Concerto for Two Trumpets and Strings, in E flat*. Manfredini: *Concerto for Two Trumpets and Orchestra*. Torelli: *Sinfonia for Trumpet and Strings*. Biber: *Sonata a 6 for Trumpet and Strings*. Telemann: *Concerto for Trumpet, Two Oboes, and Continuo, in D*.

Roger Voisin, John Rhea, trumpets; Orchestra, Kenneth Schermerhorn, cond.

- KAPP 9033. LP. \$3.98.

Three of these five baroque pieces featuring one or two trumpets—the Manfredini, Torelli, and Telemann concertos—make pleasant listening for anyone who enjoys the sound of that stirring instrument, and that

must be practically everyone. The Vivaldi, which is “transcribed” by G. F. Ghedini, is a curious hybrid: it has the head of P. 320 and the body and tail of P. 321, both of these being concertos for two horns, not trumpets. The Biber is a find. Heinrich Biber (1644-1704) is known for the high quality and complexity of his violin music, but in this “sonata” he writes idiomatic fast movements that take full advantage of the sharp, clear joyousness of which the trumpet is capable, as well as an Adagio in which that instrument is replaced by a surprisingly introspective violin. The orchestra is too subdued in this work, and there are a few off-pitch trumpet tones in the first section of the Telemann, but otherwise performance and recording are good. N.B.

Reviews continued on page 75

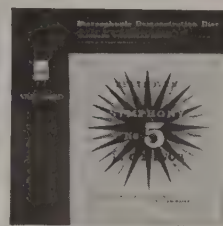
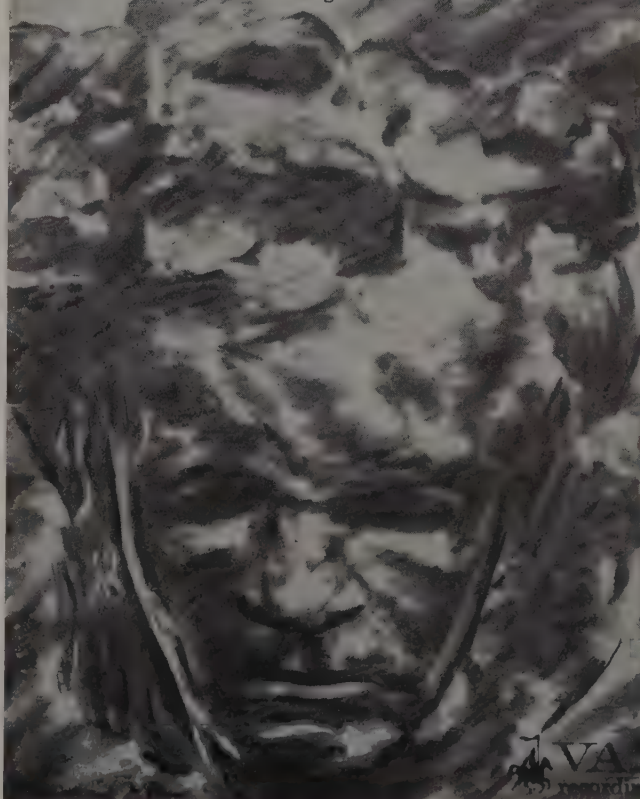
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Ludwig van Beethoven

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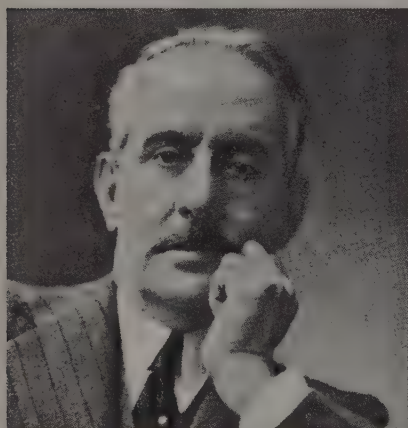
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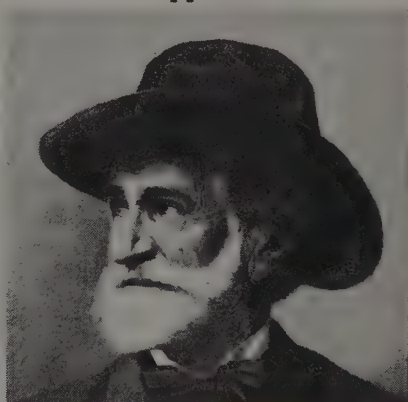
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World of Entertainment



Here at Home

"The Fabulous Josephine Baker." Josephine Baker; Orchestra, Jo Bouillon, cond. RCA Victor LM 2427, \$4.98 (LP).

Within a year of her sensational Paris debut in 1925 Josephine Baker, a young and almost unknown artist from St. Louis, had become the darling of the French music halls, and a serious challenger to Mistinguett, the then reigning favorite. The Parisian public, long-acustomed to Mistinguett's carefully considered staircase descents (one in every revue) in feather headdress and gowns designed to display her million-dollar legs, found the exotic dances of almost primitive savagery that Baker performed a fascinating novelty. Dressed in little more than a string of bananas, the newcomer performed with an abandon not previously seen on Parisian music hall stages. Then, too, she sang—in a high piping treble and in poor French—songs that had their roots in American jazz, a medium then almost unknown to French audiences. They loved it, even though the well-known critic Robert de Flers remarked on "lamentable transatlantic exhibitionism."

Miss Baker's popularity with the French has not lessened in the past thirty years and more, although her American appearances have not been overwhelmingly successful. In 1956 she appeared in Paris for a series of farewell performances, which—like the celebrated farewell tours of Harry Lauder—turned out to be the prelude to a triumphant revival of her career. In this new recording, she has chosen five of her best numbers from *Paris Mes Amours* (her spectacular success of 1959), some songs especially written for her, and one or two old French favorites. The voice is now a most attractive one, richer, deeper, and with a quality that may be best described as "Piaffish." She uses it beautifully throughout, caressing ballads like *La Seine*, *Clopin-Clopant*, and *J'attendrai* (done in a slow rocking rhythm) with affection. The *pièce de résistance* is her marvelous projection of *Donnez-Moi la Main*, where her voice takes on an authentic Spanish coloration, wonderfully appropriate for the gypsy reading a man's palm. *Don't Touch My Tomatoes*, a bright calypso number which she sings in English, is done with a touch of Gallic *gaminerie* that adds greatly to the sauciness of the lyrics.

In brief, this is a triumph for Miss Baker, whose recent appearance in New York certainly warranted the sort of red carpet treatment we have reserved over the last ten years for numerous French *chanteuses*,

few of whom have been her equal and none her superior. The singer's husband Jo Bouillon (who not unexpectedly acquired the nickname of "Mr. Soup" when he accompanied his wife here in 1951) directs the orchestra in some splendid arrangements, and the monophonic sound is tremendous.

"Hooray For Love." Mavis Rivers; Orchestra, Jack Marshall, cond. Capitol ST 1294, \$4.98. (SD).

And hooray for Mavis Rivers, who brings a sense of uninhibited gaiety to these songs of *l'amour*. A Samoan by birth, Miss Rivers sounds as if she might well turn out to be a first-class jazz singer—the inflections are apparent in nearly every number in her program, although the songs themselves are nearly all standards. It seems obvious that she has listened a little both to Ella Fitzgerald and to Sarah Vaughan, yet her style remains individual and practically flawless. This is a singer with a voice as pleasant as running water, and there is a distinct feeling of relaxation in everything she does. Jack Marshall has arranged these songs with unusual clarity for a group of just over a dozen musicians, and their support heightens the impact of the vocalist's charming work.

"A Piano, Ice Box, and Bed." Ken and Mitzie Welch. Kapp KL 1156, \$3.98 (LP); KS 3039, \$4.98 (SD).

A gay romp through some amusing and original material by a husband and wife team who may well turn out to be the successors to Comden and Green. Aiming their sights at a number of current fads—dieting,

unnecessary household equipment, and night club song stylists among others—the couple proceed to demolish them in songs that are flippant, funny, and very much to the point. Mitzie Welch's barbed lampoon of the styles used by feminine singers in New York night clubs from Fifth Avenue to Greenwich Village is likely to give some of those charmers quite a shock. A couple of duets, *You're Mad* and *What Would You Like To Eat*, are little gems of marital crosstalk, and there is an inspired coupling of *Makin' Whoopee* and *The Glory of Love*, whereby the intertwining of the lyrics produces a brilliantly hilarious situation. Put this on your adult entertainment list along with *At the Drop of a Hat* and *A Party*, in which company it well belongs.

"Life Is Just a Bowl of Cherries." Maurice Chevalier; Ray Ellis and His Orchestra. M-G-M E 3801, \$4.98 (LP).

I've long ceased to be amazed at Chevalier's uncanny ability to transform the most mundane song into something resembling a small masterpiece. I am willing to believe that were he handed the alphabet to sing it would emerge as an interesting or provocative number. Even on this mixed bag of old songs (many of which were poor stuff when they were new) he works his magic, thanks to that combination of buoyant spirits, Gallic innuendo, good humor, and a supremely individual style. I don't say he is completely successful with every number; for instance, the title song is more successfully handled than Kurt Weill's *September Song*, just as *You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby* is more adroitly revived than Kern's *She Didn't Say Yes, She Didn't Say No*. But in a program of so many delights, an occasional miss is hardly worth mentioning.

"The Old Sweet Songs." Frank DeVol and His Singing Strings. Columbia CS 8209, \$4.98 (SD).

The lyrics of these thirty old-time favorites must be reasonably familiar to almost everyone. If a musical nudge is all that is needed to bring them from the recesses of memory, then the sparkling DeVol arrangements will surely turn the trick. In no time at all most listeners will be exercising their vocal abilities on songs like *Let the Rest of the World Go By*, *Roses of Picardy*, or *Peg O' My Heart*. DeVol has obviously kept this probability in mind; he keeps the melody well to the fore and doesn't indulge in capricious changes in tempo. Most of the numbers are on the sentimental side, given warm, enticing settings and enhanced by the shimmering tone of the Singing Strings.



Josephine Baker: 1960's sensation, too.

"The Enchanted Sea." Martin Denny and His Orchestra. Liberty LRP 3141, \$3.98 (LP); LST 7141, \$4.98 (SD).

With ship's whistles, bell buoys, and the sound of keening seagulls providing a realistic maritime background, Martin Denny sails off on another exotic excursion of musical sounds. This time the motif is the sea, and though it takes a little imagination to fit *Sentimental Journey* into the category, the rest of the songs here have been carefully chosen for appropriateness. Generally speaking, they have the easy languorous rhythm of rolling waves, although occasionally the sea does get a bit choppy, resulting in an Oriental swinging version of *Sentimental Journey* and giving a Denny original, *Flotsam and Jetsam*, an almost boogie beat. Elsewhere the spray gently splashes *Beyond*

the Reef, and the waves lap in Charles Trenet's *La Mer*. Denny, a master at creating unusual orchestral effects by the use of an odd assortment of instruments, from finger bells to tam-tams and wood blocks, has created a wonderful Polynesian atmosphere here, and all its charm is beautifully realized in splendid stereo sound.

"I Wish You Love." Felicia Sanders; Orchestra, Irving Joseph, cond. Time Records 70008, \$3.98 (LP).

Felicia Sanders seldom gets around to a recording session, but when she does the result is invariably something to cheer about. Her last record for Decca (DL 8762) was a gem, and this new concert for Time is just as wonderful. A singer of great intelligence and artistry, Miss Sanders has a

real penchant for picking songs that are particularly well suited to her unique style. Few of them are likely to be found in the repertoire of better-known singers, which is just as well, for a Sanders version is usually a definitive one. I was particularly taken by her performances of *We'll Go Away Together*, a neglected Kurt Weill song; a new version of an old Sanders' favorite, *When the World Was Young*; and Frank Loesser's *Warm All Over*—which was just how I felt when Miss Sanders concluded her program.

"Organ Treasures." Don DeWitt, organ. United Artists UAS 5055, \$5.98 (SD).

The grand assortment of sounds that can be coaxed from today's Wurlitzer Pipe Organ is wondrously displayed on this record. Playing the 35-rank Wurlitzer in the Richard Loderhose studio on Long Island, Don DeWitt gives us a little of everything, from the *vox humana* to the "sizzle cymbal," from piano and guitar to the sound of a cuckoo. Just about the only thing missing is the skirl of the bagpipes . . . and doubtless that is in the offing. This is movie theatre organ playing at its best, particularly in *June Is Bustin' Out All Over*, when the listener can almost see the organ rising from the pit. Even so, there is less use of effects for effect's sake here than on most organ recordings. The sound is magnificent, capable of shaking the rafters or just breathing gently through the atmosphere. Furthermore, it's so vivid that one can hear the air entering the pipes as individual valves open and close electronically.

"Della." Della Reese; Neal Hefti and His Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 2157, \$3.98 (LP).

In some of her more exuberant performances on this disc, Della Reese impresses me as being one of the most galvanic girl singers to come to the fore in years. Her background as a gospel singer, and later as a singer of pop songs, hardly prepares one for the sort of feline ferocity she displays in this program. Miss Reese's voice is not basically agreeable and she indulges in vocal mannerisms that are sometimes unpleasant; but such drawbacks are effaced by the genuine excitement in her treatment of these songs. The lone failure, at least for me, is the overextended version of *Someday (You'll Want Me To Want You)*. There is also a studied version of *The Lady Is a Tramp*, which makes one wonder if the singer was trying to offer a vocal impersonation of Katherine Hepburn.

"East of the Sun." Anita Darian. Orchestra, Frank Hunter, cond. Kapp KL 1168, \$3.98 (LP); KS 3052, \$4.98 (LP).

Anita Darian, a young American singer of Armenian descent, has a lovely soprano voice of limpid tone, remarkable range, and great flexibility which she handles most effectively. Unfortunately, it does not seem to be very well suited to some of the songs she has chosen. From the Broadway assembly line she has selected a number of Oriental-flavored songs, and though there are haunting performances of *Mountain High*, *Valley Low* and *Chinese Lullaby*, she is much less successful with *We Kiss in a Shadow* and

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Poor Butterfly. It is when she turns her attention to traditional Armenian folk songs that the program comes bursting to life. Her voice takes on added vibrancy and a curiously seductive quality, investing the plaintive *Anoush Karoon* and the light, lilting *Hoy Nar* with a charm that is irresistible. She even succeeds in turning that piece of pseudo-Armenian folk song *Come On-A My House* into a charming song of invitation, a feat I would hardly have thought possible. Frank Hunter directs the excellent orchestral arrangements superbly, while giving the singer noble support.

"High Spirits." The Four Lads. Orchestra, Billy Dennison, cond. Columbia CS 8203, \$4.98 (SD).

Familiar as all these spirituals are, they take on unexpected freshness and vitality thanks to the free-swinging style adopted by The Four Lads. Yet for all the high spirits and bounce that it brings to these numbers, the quartet still maintains a feeling of reverence for the material. Nor has it injected into these thoroughly honest performances any semblance of commercial veneer. Bright orchestral backing and excellent stereo sound make this a most attractive record.

"Accordion Time." Mogens Ellegaard and His Orchestra. Vox VX 26090, \$3.98 (LP); STVX 426090, \$4.98 (SD).

Ellegaard's first record for Vox (VX 25840) was an unusually interesting one, containing several works seldom, if ever, played on the accordion. On this recording, he drops down the musical scale to a program of light music that all accordionists hold dear. Which means that he plays another *Tico Tico*, *The Hot Canary*, *Frenesi*, and Anderson's *Sleigh Ride*, all fine numbers but all encountered far too frequently. This doesn't mean the treatment is perfunctory, though; Ellegaard's performances have plenty of verve and are impeccably fingered and full of exciting dynamic effects. The balance between soloist and orchestra is well managed, and the Vox sound is brilliant.

"The London Theatre Company Presents *Gigi* and *South Pacific*." Soloists; London Theatre Company Chorus and Orchestra, Cyril Stapleton, cond. Richmond B 20074, \$1.98 (LP); S 30074, \$2.98 (SD).

Taking five songs from the scores of these two musicals, members of the London Theatre Company have tried to present them in the manner of the original artists. This is a pretty bold undertaking, particularly when the original artists included Chevalier, Gingold, and Pinza. In *Gigi*, the results are surprisingly good. Ray Merrill catches the Chevalier tone and style well, and Joy Worth has caught the Gingold intonation admirably. But *South Pacific* is not so fortunate, mainly because Andy Cole is no Pinza, and Pat Whitworth's version of *Bali Ha'i* bears little, if any, resemblance to Juanita Hall's superb performance. In the only Mary Martin number recorded, *A Wonderful Guy*, Janet Waters is a reasonable facsimile of the original Nellie Forbush. The recorded sound is unusually good on both versions, and their low prices make them attractive propositions.

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These appear to be re-mastered recordings of dance music sets previously in the Capitol catalogue. Originally issued in 1951 as ten-inch LPs, they were later transferred to twelve-inch records. Their reappearance is probably prompted by the success of the weekly television program of Arthur Murray, who gave his blessing to the original issues. The idea of selecting a well-known orchestra which specializes in a particular dance form and having it present the music in good clean-cut arrangements, with accent on a steady, secure rhythm, is an excellent one. Both novice and expert dancers should find these records extremely helpful for home instruction; and teachers, I'm sure, will find them invaluable. The sound, though not the equal of Capitol's high-fidelity sound of today, is quite acceptable, and a considerable improvement over that heard on the previous issues.

"Musical Moods from the Silent Films."

Arthur Kleiner, piano. Golden Crest CR 4019, \$4.98 (LP).

In those old enough to remember the days when the movies were silent save for the tinkling accompaniment provided by a piano this little collection of piano mood music should induce a severe case of nostalgia. Listening to these excerpts will bring back memories of William S. Hart, Lillian Gish, Theda Bara, and other stars of the silent era. This documentation of an age long past is the work of Arthur Kleiner, resident pianist in New York City's Museum of Modern Art. It is his job to provide the piano accompaniment to the old silents that the Museum shows, and from his library of scores he has selected music appropriate to the swiftly changing moods of the films. The names of some of the composers are familiar enough, particularly Erno Rapee, Hugo Reisenfeld, and Domenico Savino. But who was Breil, whose love theme for *The Birth of a Nation* Amos and Andy appropriated as the theme song for their radio program? And here's Camille Saint-Saëns turning up as the composer of a film score for the 1908 French drama *L'Assassinat du Duc de Guise*. The recorded sound is realistic enough to recall the early days; all that is missing is the slide saying "Don't throw things at the pianist, he's doing his best." In this case, he certainly is.

"The Student Prince." Mario Lanza; Norma Giusti; Chorus and Orchestra, Paul Baron, cond. RCA Victor LM 2339, \$4.98 (LP).

Romberg's melodic and familiar score for the original Broadway production of *The Student Prince*, though strong enough to keep that show running for 608 performances, was not considered good enough for the movie version, starring Mario Lanza, made almost thirty years later. For that, Roy Brodzsky was called upon for additional numbers, most of them carefully tailored to exploit the Lanza voice. It is

this Romberg-Brodzsky amalgam that has been used in this new recording, made just prior to the tenor's death. In spite of their age, the Romberg songs retain their charm, while Brodzsky's additions sound distinctly faded. As one who missed the movie version, I simply cannot imagine where the dreary *I'll Walk with God*, for example, could possibly have fitted into the operetta plot.

Lanza is in fair voice, though there is evidence of strain in some of his work, and he is occasionally guilty of being almost a semitone sharp. The performance is less robust than that on Victor LM 1837, but the moments of poor taste that disfigured the earlier work still are in evidence here. In the three duets which she sings with Lanza, Norma Giusti displays a small, sweet soprano voice, which unfortunately is almost swamped by the tenor's ardent singing. The recorded sound is good.

JOHN F. INDCOX

Foreign Flavor

"Hello Amigos." The Ames Brothers; Esquivel and His Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 2100, \$3.98 (LP).

A surprisingly effective performance in an unfamiliar idiom by the brothers Ames. Sixteen well-known and well-loved Latin-American songs—*Frenesi*, *Maria Elena*, *Brazil*, *Amapola*, etc.—are nicely handled both musically and linguistically by the *nortie-americano* quartet that clearly enjoyed every measure it recorded. Imaginative accompaniments by Esquivel and superclear reproduction by RCA round out a thoroughly attractive package.

"Gypsy Ecstasy." Yoska Nemeth and His Gypsy Ensemble. Everest LPBR 5065, \$3.98 (LP).

A flashing, exciting program of gypsy themes played on traditional instruments and conducted by a man who grew up with them. While Yoska Nemeth's transcriptions of Brahms's *Hungarian Dance No. 5* and Liszt's *Second Hungarian Rhapsody* may cause veteran concertgoers to blench, the fact remains that he imparts a new and fiery cachet to each. A well-conceived, well played release—and impeccably engineered.

"Berlin Bei Nacht." Songs in German, Led by Horst Kudritzki. Capitol ST 10228, \$4.98 (SD).

Here is a disc worthy of the slangy, skeptical capital of pre-partition Germany. A small battalion of Berlin artists romp through no less than thirty-four West German hits in a once-over-lightly that merely whets the appetite for more. Particularly attractive are *Komm in den Park von Sanssouci*, *Die kleine Bank am grossen Stern*, and the lovely *Das War in Schöneberg*. Excellent stereo sound.

"Greetings from Italy." Gianni Monese and His Orchestra. Vox VX 26170, \$3.98 (LP); STVX 426170, \$4.98 (SD).

Vivacious orchestrations of Italian traditional favorites such as *Santa Lucia*, *Marrecchiare*, and *Ciribiribin* played by an Italian who knows how to coax every emotional nuance from this florid music. Monese projects the songs onto a larger-than-life musical

canvas, but by adroit use of an accordion here, a banjo there, he manages to preserve their essential simplicity. Vox's stereo is broad, bright, and deep: the LP too is excellent of its kind but this disc cries for two channels.

"Hot." El Cubanito and His Cha-Cha Orchestra. Musidisc M 6007, \$3.98 (LP); MS 16007, \$4.98 (SD).

Torrid is the word for the unspecified *El Cubanito*, or "Little Cuban," who here takes his cha-cha beat on a tour of non-cha-cha territory. On the whole, Cubanito imparts a new rhythmic dimension to such as *Blue Moon*, *Maria Elena*, and even *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*. Once in a while, good taste goes out the window, but on the whole this is one of the most attractive discs I've heard. Very fine stereo as well as mono. Take your choice.

"The All-Time Top Tangos." Stanley Black and His Orchestra. London PS 176, \$4.98 (SD).

Luscious, large-scale arrangements of tangos like *La Cumparsita*, *Jalousie*, and *El Choclo* played with the customary Black *élan*. Because Black's treatment aims at the ear rather than the feet, there is a constant danger of overpretentious orchestral effects, but in general the maestro tidily skirts the edge. Big, broad sound to match the big, broad orchestration.

"Les Compagnons de la Chanson." Capitol ST 10227, \$4.98 (SD).

Anyone who can survive the nauseating English version of *Les Trois Cloches*—starring "leette Jeemie Brown"—that leads off this collection will be rewarded with a pleasant forty minutes *chez* Les Compagnons de la Chanson. High spots are a swinging *Guitare et Tambourine*, a delightfully satirical *Margoton s'en va-t'en guerre*, and a blazing Hebrew-French account of an Israeli folk song, *Hava Naguila*. It is a joy to welcome Les Compagnons back to the lists, particularly in Capitol's crisp stereo sound.

"Flamenco Singing and Dancing." Sarita and Company. World Pacific WP 1282, \$4.98 (LP); Stereo 1282, \$4.98 (SD).

"Dos Flamencos." Jaime Grifo and Niño Marvino. Liberty DLRP 3147, \$3.98 (LP); LST 7147, \$4.98 (SD).

Although given to the lighter forms of flamenco and having their home base in California—two equal horrors to the *aficionado* mind—Sarita Heredia and her colleagues of Los Angeles' Club Matador give an adequate account of themselves in a broad-based program. As a guitarist, Sarita will cause no sleepless nights for Montoya or Sabicas, but she is still an interesting—if unfinished—instrumentalist. Those who love sound for sound's sake will find unique fulfillment in the stereo disc where, at one point, castanets in one speaker counterpoint the beating heels of a dancer in the other.

Jaime Grifo (James Fawcett) and Niño Marvino (Martin Walker) are two Anglo-Saxons who have taken Spanish camouflage to justify their command of a peculiarly Hispanic idiom. We, as well as the Spanish, are guilty of prejudging in cases such as these (remember the ill-starred *torero* Sidney Franklin, whom no one would take quite



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seriously?), but these two guitarists know exactly what they are doing and how to do it. If they lack a certain fire, its absence does not stem from lack of rapport with their material. With time and with luck, these young men may show many a gypsy a musical trick or two. The mono edition possesses a close-knit fullness that the stereo cannot match.

"Original Soho Skiffle Group." Time T 70005, \$3.98 (LP).

If late reports from London can be credited, English skiffle music is already in decline—which would make it the shortest-lived phenomenon since the sack dress. Originally, skiffle in its British framework consisted of guitar and rhythm accompaniments for American blues and ballads, which in turn were sung in a carefully aped American accent. Later, the skiffle virtuosos extended their lusty techniques to the entire body of Anglo-American folk song as well. The surprising element is the new vigor that this sea change imparts to the likes of *She Was Poor But She Was Honest* and *Clementine*. The unidentified instrumentalists of the Soho group keep a steady and infectious beat, while the vocalists—despite, or perhaps because of, the *mésalliance* of Chelsea and Tennessee accents—bestow an inviting luster upon their songs. This is full-blooded entertainment, and Time's engineers have given it full-blooded reproduction.

"Die Fledermaus." Vienna Theater-Konzert Orchestra, Conrad Lieder, cond. Kapp KL 1153, \$3.98 (LP); KS 3036, \$4.98 (SD).

"The Merry Widow." Vienna Theater-Konzert Orchestra, Conrad Lieder, cond. Kapp KL 1152, \$3.98 (LP); KS 3035, \$4.98 (SD).

Kapp's project of recording "operetta without words" finds handsome subject matter in Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* and Lehár's *Merry Widow*. In this compressed format, the most infectious airs of both frothy works tumble over each other helter-skelter. But this accessibility is—at least in my opinion—somewhat vitiated by the lack of lyrics. A *Vilia* without words is a bit less than life-sized. Be that as it may, Conrad Lieder (can this winsome name be genuine?) and his Viennese musicians press the last possible bubble from this musical champagne. In each case the stereo version eclipses the mono, despite the fact that separation is not the engineers' forte.

"German Freedom Songs." Chorus of the Federation of Unions of Berlin, Gerhard Raeker, cond. Bruno BR 50110, \$3.98 (LP).

Anyone who was stirred by the several 78-rpm albums of Spanish Civil War songs issued some fifteen years ago—or anyone interested in the heights to which the proletarian ballads of the Thirties and Forties ascended—will find this Bruno-Acropole release very well worth investigating. The engineering is mediocre, but the Chorus of the Federation of Unions of Berlin sings with feeling, discipline, and sometimes—as in *Die Moorsoldaten*—with genuine brilliance. Far less interesting are the East German accordion hops that fill out the disc.

O. B. BRUMMELL

JAZZ

Count Basie and His Orchestra: "Basie's Basement." RCA Camden 497, \$1.98 (LP).

For Count Basie, the latter years of the Forties, just before he broke up his first big band, were depressingly unproductive. This lackluster collection of reissues comes from that period. There are occasional moments of merit (Basie's piano, a searing tenor saxophone solo by Buddy Tate), but most of the time the band plods through dull material and even turns in a stiff, drab performance on that old classic, *South*. Jimmy Rushing has three spirited vocals.

Duke Ellington and His Orchestra: "Festival Session." Columbia CL 1400, \$3.98 (LP).

Although recorded in a studio, this disc is representative of the frustrating programing that Ellington customarily offers during the outdoor festival season. It is frustrating because there is so much evidence of the glory still latent in the Ellington organization. Almost all of the first side of this disc is utter waste—one of Paul Gonsalves' empty, flat-toned marathon tenor saxophone solos and a long, long opus in which the two drummers whom Ellington carried with him last summer have at each other. The only saving grace on the side is a graceful Clark Terry trumpet solo which makes an otherwise lumbering treatment of *Perdido* slightly palatable. Yet on Side 2 Ellington offers a richly rhythmic and harmonically colorful extended work, *Idiom '59*, a stirring version of his onetime theme *Things Ain't What They Used To Be* (which spurs Johnny Hodges to a glowingly gutty solo), and a third piece, *Launching Pad*. The last, if scarcely top-grade Ellington, is at least not disquieting. It is too much to expect any jazz group, even Ellington's, to be consistently good, but the first side of this disc is inexplicable from a musician of Duke Ellington's caliber.

Curtis Fuller Quintet: "Blues-ette." Savoy 12141, \$4.98 (LP).

It is, one suspects, the presence and influence of Benny Golson which has made this disc a disciplined, well-directed set of easily swinging selections. Certainly Golson's hand is evident in the ensemble passages that get these pieces off to a good start (two are his own compositions—*Minor Vamp* and *Five Spot After Dark*) and establish an atmosphere in which Fuller, Golson, and pianist Tommy Flanagan solo in a relaxed and interesting fashion. There is a fine rough-and-ready spirit throughout the disc, fortified by the contrast among the three soloists—Golson swelling and exuberant, Fuller darkly urgent, and Flanagan rhythmically airy. Although all these musicians must be counted as modernists, they seem, on this disc, to be edging towards their mainstream colleagues.

Al Grey and the Basie Wing: "The Last of the Big Plungers." Argo 653, \$3.98 (LP). Grey's superbly raucous, growling outbursts with plunger-muted trombone have helped

to enliven Count Basie's band for the past year or more. There they are used as accents within a larger picture. But on this disc they become the focal point of the picture, with the result that this limited style is spread too thin. Surrounded by a group of fellow Basieites, Grey tries hard, but it soon becomes apparent that there is only so much that can be done with trombone and plunger.

Lionel Hampton: "Swings." Perfect 12002, \$1.98 (LP).

This is the best serving of Hampton that has been delivered in several years. Hitting a middle ground between his appearances in empty big-band rock 'n' roll and as soloist-with-rhythm-section, he is heard here with a seven-piece group that swings along easily and provides capable trumpet, trombone, and tenor saxophone solos to spell his stints at the vibraphone. Hampton is relaxed, unpretentious, and liltily swinging in these surroundings. Why this set was sneaked out on one of Columbia's most obscure labels is one of the numerous mysteries that beset the record business.

Barry Harris Trio: "Breakin' It Up." Argo 644, \$3.98 (LP).

Harris is a Detroit pianist who has chosen to stay home rather than follow the numerous other Detroit musicians who have recently gone to New York to gain some measure of fame. His playing on this disc, with bass and drum accompaniment, is extremely graceful and lyrical. He has a light, swinging touch which gives an airy propulsion to his faster pieces (he chooses such classics from the modern repertory as *Ornithology* and *Allen's Alley* instead of limiting himself to "originals"); and when he turns to ballads (again, good ones—*All the Things You Are*, *Embraceable You*), he has the sound good taste to keep his imaginative developments within assimilable bounds. Harris is one of the least derivative pianists in current jazz and, on this disc, one of the most communicative.

Illinois Jacquet: "Flies Again." Roulette 52035, \$3.98 (LP); S52035, \$4.98 (SD).

The general impression of Jacquet as a squealer and honker is less than fair to this talented saxophonist (although there is no question that he himself created the impression by his extensive honking and squealing). But he is also an exceptionally warm-toned, lyrical performer who can be one of the most exciting and suavely swinging of his breed when he forgets his showboating tactics. This disc, fortunately, frequently puts him in a lyrical framework (with such old favorites as *Robbins Nest*, *Ghost of a Chance*, and *Black Velvet* and a pleasant new one, *Sleeping Susan*). There are occasional flights into panic but no unadulterated examples of his lithe, swinging style.

Philly Joe Jones: "Showcase." Riverside 12313, \$4.98 (LP); 1159, \$5.95 (SD).

Flashes of promising playing by Bill Barron, tenor saxophone, Julian Priester, trombone, and Blue Mitchell, trumpet, sputter through this disc, but almost every piece soon becomes a drum solo for Jones. Enough of this very quickly becomes enough. On one number Jones's drums are properly subdued

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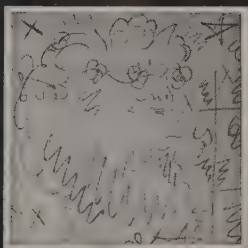
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while, by overdubbing, he plays a piano solo. He's a very pleasant, meditative, lyrical pianist. This is the only uncluttered, properly balanced piece in the set.

Stan Kenton and His Orchestra: "Viva Kenton." Capitol W 1305, \$4.98 (LP); SW 1305, \$5.98 (SD). "Road Show." Capitol TBO 1327, \$7.98 (Two LP); STBO 1327, \$9.98 (Two SD).

Viva Kenton is the commercial Kenton, a ponderous dance band lumbering heavily through cha-chas with the musical equivalent of middle-age spread. At that, this is preferable to the fustian of Kenton's current attempts at jazz as shown on *Road Show*, a recording of a concert package in which the Kenton band toured last fall (along with June Christy and the Four Freshmen, who are also heard in this two-disc set). The fire that once gave even Kenton's more pretentious arrangements some semblance of validity is on this disc completely gone.

Yusef Lateef Quintet: "The Fabric of Jazz." Savoy 12140, \$4.98 (LP).

With his present group (Bernard McKinney, euphonium, Terry Pollard, piano, William Austin, bass, Frank Gant, drums) Lateef foregoes his fondness for exotic novelties in favor of out-and-out swinging. This is all to the good. Lateef is an exultant but disciplined tenor saxophonist who rides warmly through the three swinging selections on this disc, aided by the intensely prodding piano of Miss Pollard. There are also two ballads, one by Lateef on flute, the other by Mc-

Kinney who, surprisingly, uses the euphonium to good advantage in a slow tempo.

George Lewis: "A New Orleans Dixieland Spectacular." Omega 1053, \$3.98 (LP).

A 1953 session by Lewis' best band (Howard, Robinson, Purnell, Marrero, Pavageau, Watkins), once available on the Jazzman label, and some previously unreleased selections made in 1955 by a quartet (Lewis, P. T. Stanton, cornet, Dick Oxtot, banjo, and Lelias Sharpton, bass) make up this generally satisfying disc. Lewis' band is at the peak of its surging drive on a performance of *The Saints* which is so good that one forgets how wearisome this warhorse has become. And it makes a fervent vehicle of *A Closer Walk with Thee*. But Lewis' traditional blues, *Burgundy Street*, is buried under a hokey recitation by Monette Moore, and the potentially exhilarating *Dr. Jazz* is given a stodgy treatment. Lewis carries most of the load in the quartet selections, which become pleasant showcases for his gentle, sweet-and-sour, singing playing.

Lou McGarity's Big Eight: "Blue Lou." Argo 654, \$3.98 (LP).

Potentially, the combination of McGarity, a uniquely lusty trombonist, Doc Severinson, a brilliantly pungent trumpeter, and the inventive talents of two multi-instrumentalists and arrangers, Bob Wilber and Dick Cary, should result in a rewarding disc. This collection of pieces of blue (*Blue Moon*, *Blue Prelude*, *Blue Skies*, *Black and Blue*, ad almost *infinitum*) has its rewarding moments but the over-all tone is much too polite. McGarity

is neither truly blue nor properly hoydenish, and his group wanders somewhat footlessly around in a temperate middle ground.

The Modern Jazz Disciples. New Jazz 8222, \$4.98 (LP).

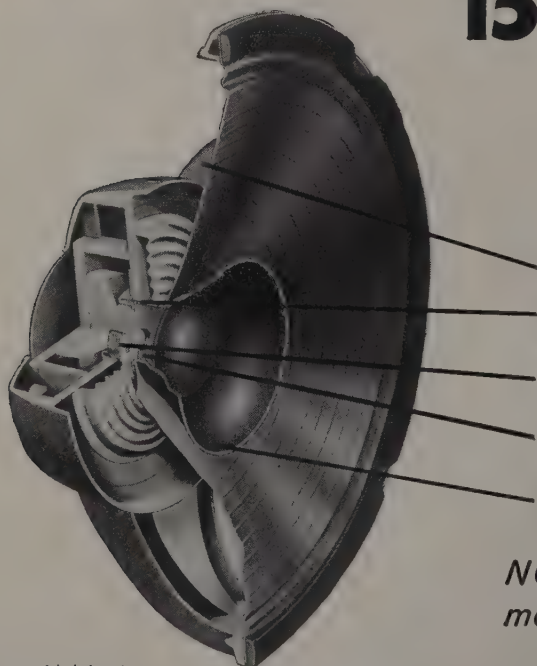
The Disciples, a quintet, make their recording debut on this disc. The group gets a strong basic drive from a rhythm section which has something of the assertive push evident in Horace Silver's quintet, and it has a very polished and confident alto saxophonist in Curtis Peagler. However, Hicky Kelly, one of its three regular soloists (along with Peagler and pianist Billy Brown), insists on playing either the normaphone (described in the disturbingly illiterate liner notes as "a valve trombone shaped like an alto saxophone") or the euphonium, neither of which, in his hands, gives any evidence of being suitable for jazz. Beyond this, the Disciples' fondness for boppish themes at upper-middle tempos makes for monotonous programming. Still, the disc holds promise for the future in its introduction of Peagler and in the ensemble attack of the group.

The Wes Montgomery Trio. Riverside 12310, \$4.98 (LP).

The guitarist brother of Monk and Buddy Montgomery (until recently one half of The Mastersounds) has a quiet, temperate attack, gets a mellow sound from his strings, and has a thoughtful manner of constructing solos. He has, moreover, an ear for good material

Continued on page 84

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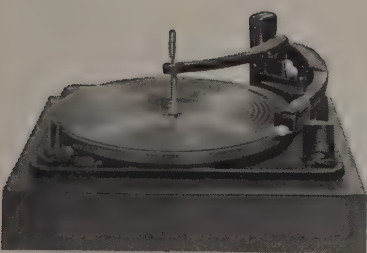
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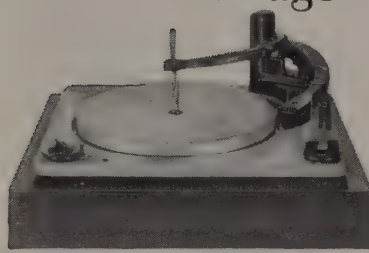


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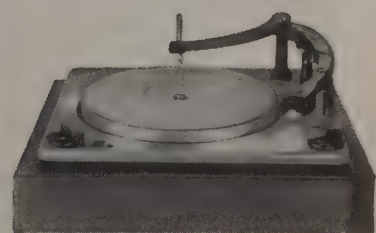
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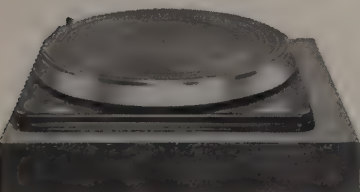


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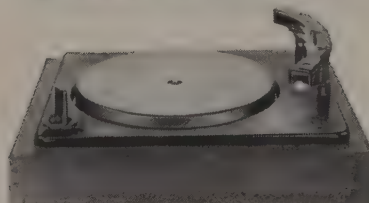


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as is evidenced by this program. But all these merits are dimmed in this collection by the fact that his accompaniment (organ and drums) has a dim, mushy quality which clouds his guitar work and, since the accompanists are routine performers, produces a needlessly tedious atmosphere.

Jelly Roll Morton: "Mr. Jelly Lord." Riverside 12132, \$4.98 (LP).

The twelve piano solos on this disc have been taken from the recordings made for the Library of Congress by Morton in 1938 (they are available in their entirety on a series of twelve Riverside LPs). On the original recordings Morton talks and sings in addition to playing the piano. The solos alone make a magnificent disc, for Morton was quite consciously stating his case for posterity when he made these recordings. And despite the inadequate sound (somewhat improved by remastering on this release), Morton's genius as a creator, organizer, and developer of jazz material is constantly apparent. The disc includes a superb *Creepy Feeling* in addition to excellent versions of *Kansas City Stomps*, *The Crave*, *The Pearls*, *Hyena Stomp*, and *Mama Nita*. Along with his Red Hot Peppers recordings (RCA Victor LPM 1649) and his singing on Commodore 30000, this disc completes a rounded portrait of Morton as musician.

Dave Pell: "The Big Small Bands." Capitol T 1309, \$3.98 (LP); ST 1309, \$4.98 (SD).

Dave Pell has not really been able to bring alive such small groups as John Kirby's, Benny Goodman's, Artie Shaw's, Gerry

Mulligan's, the Miles Davis 1949 nonet, or Gene Krupa's 1945 trio—any more than Glen Gray can reproduce their big-band counterparts. Yet unlike the big bands, which have been aped extensively on records, the small bands have been all but ignored. It is refreshing to hear this reminder of some of their sprightly qualities.

Booker Pittman: "The Fabulous Booker Pittman." Musidisc 6006, \$3.98 (LP); 16006, \$4.98 (SD).

Besides hailing Pittman as "fabulous" in its title, this disc is subtitled "The No. 1 Soprano Sax in the World." This puts Pittman in a very unfair light, for he is neither. He is a soprano saxophonist of limited scope, a pale derivative of Sidney Bechet, who wisely does not try to extend himself beyond his small capacities. Even so, he is much better than the routine, unidentified group with which he plays.

Django Reinhardt: "The Best of Django Reinhardt." Capitol TBO 10226, \$7.98 (Two LP).

Although several reissue LPs of Reinhardt's work have appeared, this is the first collection that gives an adequate representation of his playing. Two sides are devoted to the Quintet of the Hot Club of France, the group with which Reinhardt made his name. The remaining two sides contain a fascinating miscellany of performances with Rex Stewart, Barney Bigard, Bill Coleman, Dickie Wells, and Big Boy Goudie as well as a pair of raggedly played big-band selections. This set finally fills a glaring gap in the available discography of jazz.

Johnny Richards and His Orchestra: "Walk Softly, Run Wild." Coral 57305, \$3.98 (LP); 757305, \$4.98 (SD).

Richards has done a good deal of writing for Stan Kenton during the past twelve years, and his composing and arranging for his own band carry overtones of this relationship. The essential Kenton sound is here, but there is more air and light in the writing, and the performances are freer and looser. Yet Richards does not entirely escape from a Kentonian aura of pretentiousness, particularly in the tempestuous original pieces which make up one side of the disc. On the other side Richards builds pleasant mood pieces around some popular ballads. The performances glisten with spit and polish.

Lem Winchester: "Winchester Special." New Jazz 8223, \$4.98 (LP).

Winchester, a vibist first unveiled to a wide public at Newport in 1958, plays in a probing, rhythmic manner somewhere between the contemplative funk of Milt Jackson and Lionel Hampton's easy swing. He shares solo space here with two equally well-oriented men, tenor saxophonist Benny Golson and pianist Tommy Flanagan. All three have something to say and the ability to keep a solo moving from point to point. This is a highly professional recording, typified by the way in which the group plays *How Are Things in Glocca Morra* with a true balladic feeling based on a lightly swinging foundation in place of the deadly drag that is all too customary for ballads.

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BEETHOVEN SYMPHONIES

by ROBERT C. MARSH

desired effect. To cite a major example, Solti's pace in the scherzo is certainly not the quickest you will ever hear, but it gives a feeling of speed while—unlike the usual fast performance—it permits the breadth of the phrases to register as forcefully as their sense of motion.

Solti takes the first movement repeat, a practice I am coming to admire, but which necessitates a break in the second movement. (Other sets have this same disadvantage with no compensating interest.) I got around this drawback by making a tape copy of the disc.

The Walter sound is as bright, but not as rich, as that from Vienna, and his performance is more decisively rhythmic in feeling. It is an excellent orthodox account of the score without the first movement repeat but with the slow movement intact on the A side. Walter manages to give full respect to Beethoven's markings without a sense of dreary dedication, and he produces some very exciting effects that, at times, surpass Solti's. The result, therefore, is a strong edition which deserves respect.

The next three sets are all interesting but present specialized approaches that will probably please one only to the degree that the listener finds their outlook congenial.

Keilberth "veers to majesty, to Olympian contemplation," to borrow phrases from a Beethovenian colleague. It is a performance in terms of very spacious outlines, seeking grandeur rather than excitement and managing at its best to produce both. At \$2.98 it is a very good buy. Here too the second movement is divided between sides.

Scherchen plays the repeat in the opening movement, which again necessitates a break in the second, and the quality of the recorded sound here is only average. Neither of these matters is nearly as important, however, as the quality of his performance—its speed, freedom from rhetoric, and lightness of texture. This is a highly unorthodox reading that is remarkably convincing.

The exceptionally well-engineered Munch edition, apart from a fine account of the second movement (again divided) is *furioso* in manner, brilliantly hard-driving in effect. It is, unfortunately, lacking in the deeper substance of the music.

The four final sets, all fairly orthodox in their approach and satisfying in concept and execution, contribute little not heard before.

Monophonically, Klemperer is dominant on Angel 35328 and there is an excellent Toscanini recording (from his final season) newly issued on RCA Victor LM 2387. Kleiber's edition on Richmond 19051 is an outstanding buy for \$1.98. The older

Beecham, Markevitch, Reiner, and Von Karajan sets are also of continuing interest.

—G. Solti, Vienna Philharmonic Orch. LONDON CS 6145. \$4.98.

—B. Walter, Columbia Symphony Orch. COLUMBIA MS 6036. \$5.98.

—J. Keilberth, Hamburg State Philharmonic Orch. TELEFUNKEN 18003. \$2.98.

—H. Scherchen, Vienna State Opera Orch. WESTMINSTER WST 14045. \$5.98.

—C. Munch, Boston Symphony Orch. RCA VICTOR LSC 2233. \$5.98.

—G. Szell, Cleveland Orch. EPIC BC 1001. \$5.98.

—A. Dorati, Minneapolis Symphony Orch. MERCURY SR 90011. \$5.95.

—G. Hurst, Royal Danish Orch. FORUM SF 70017. \$2.98.

—A. Boult, Philharmonic Promenade Orch. VANGUARD VRS 1012 (with *Coriolan* overture). \$5.95.

Symphony No. 4, in B flat, Op. 60 (3 stereo versions)

Written in 1806, midway in the work on its more famous successor in the chronology, the Fourth was first played the year following. It was not particularly successful—even such people as Weber failed to grasp its unique charm. I am inclined to think that the premiere performance must have been a pretty bad one.

Of the three stereo versions, all acceptable, the Ansermet is plainly the best. He finds, invariably, the elusive rightness in tempo, the exact means to an effective transition, and the proper clarity and balance. The engineering defect of strings sometimes too ample in relation to the whole is not serious in the light of greater merits.

The Walter set is equally sensitive to the requirements of the score; his results, however, are somewhat less forceful than Ansermet's. The problem here is weaker registration of the orchestral lines, and the ensemble quality, by comparison, lacks strength. The sonically better Keilberth disc lacks the grace of the other two, particularly in the introduction to the opening movement.

Monophonically, the best buy is Solti's excellent recording on Richmond 19033. The Walter set is, of course, available in mono, as is a fine version by Scherchen.

—E. Ansermet, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. LONDON CS 6070 (with *Coriolan* overture). \$4.98.

—B. Walter, Columbia Symphony Orch. COLUMBIA MS 6055 (with Sym. No. 5). \$5.98.

—J. Keilberth, Hamburg State Philharmonic Orch. TELEFUNKEN TCS 18024. \$2.98.

Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67 (14 stereo versions)

The Beethoven Fifth is a universal classic which has penetrated our society so thoroughly that, whether or not an individual wants to hear it, there is no resistance to the idea of its greatness. It is not surprising to find that such a composition took even a Beethoven four years of work. The earliest sketches for the Fifth date from 1804, immediately after the *Eroica*. The manuscript apparently was completed about the same time as the *Pastoral*, with which it was first presented in December 1808.

The Fifth is not so much a short symphony as a wonderfully compressed one. Its opening bars release a thematic and rhythmic figure that may be fate knocking at the door, V-for-victory, or what you will, but musically are little short of perpetual motion. The symphony is not built up from those four notes, since—as Weingartner demonstrated in his treatise *On the Performance of the Beethoven Symphonies*—the four notes are never a unit unto themselves but the germinal point from which Beethoven develops the most miraculous successions of ideas. A conductor who pounds away at dah-dah-dah DAH and misses the flowing energy of the work is undeserving of praise.

The surprising thing is how few really satisfactory Fifths we have now or ever had in the past. It takes only a rehearing of the monumental Furtwängler-Berlin Philharmonic recording from 1937 to make the majority of the present editions sound like the work of precocious children. Of the currently available versions, after two afternoons with fourteen stereo sets, I was ready to forget them all and go back to the Klemperer monophonic—in all candor, the finest performance currently available.

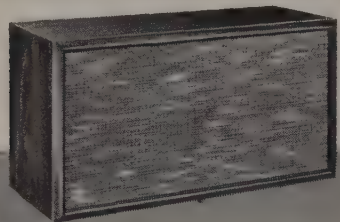
The Fifth contains a double bar at the close of the exposition, and any conductor who fails to respect this repeat distorts the form of the opening movement by seriously curtailing the length of the exposition in relation to what follows. Since nine of the fourteen stereo editions make the repeat, we have plenty to choose from even if we cast the nonrepeaters collectively into limbo. The problem then becomes one of finding a congenial performance in reasonably faithful stereo sonics. This, it turns out, is difficult.

Solti's edition is beautifully recorded and projects a highly charged, martial point of view that sacrifices breadth and contempla-



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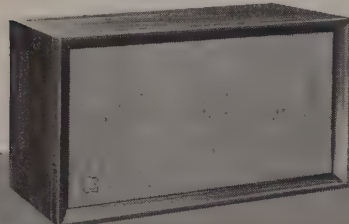


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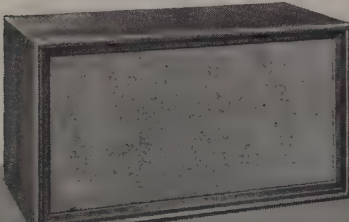


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tion to the frenzy of a cavalry charge with spirits high and sabers drawn. It is not the Fifth as I prefer it, but it has movement and fire, and one cannot hear it and remain unresponsive—although one's reaction may be violent disagreement. Since Solti has plainly secured exactly what he wanted, and since the orchestra is marvelous and the engineering the best of the lot, I give this version first place—but reluctantly. (Please note my later comments on the new Jochum set in this month's record reviews.)

Ansermet's edition is marred by a somewhat calculated quality that manifests itself from time to time; on the whole, though, it is spontaneous, moving, and effective. The recording is not up to the level of the Vienna set, but it is entirely satisfactory. If it were not for the cumulative force of the Solti, this would be my first choice in stereo, and those who prefer a conservative approach will find it more pleasing.

Prohaska's edition is orthodox, well recorded; if not a great performance, it is certainly a good one, with energy and stylistic authority not to be undervalued.

Although the Reiner performance takes time to warm up (the second statement of the exposition is superior to the first, for example) and the recording is overly reverberant, it is a reading with strength and a force of ensemble tone notably lacking in many of its rivals. I wish, however, that its rhythmic energy seemed less contrived. Keilberth offers an even stronger (and more consistent) performance in the Central European tradition. In its slower pace and more carefully shaped phrases you will find things the faster versions miss. The drawback here is the recorded sound of the violins, which can be unpleasant unless you have adequate tone controls to improve things.

None of the next four sets in the accompanying listing really is competitive with those already discussed.

Among the nonrepeaters, Walter is possibly the dupe of a recording director who insisted that the performance be kept within the dimensions of a single record surface. He may also have been the victim of an economy drive that provided him with echo instead of a large enough orchestra. The results are worth hearing but a disappointment. The Rodzinski set was one of Westminster's earliest stereo productions and shows it, but the somewhat heavy performance is not at all a bad one. Goehr's non-repeating set (for the Perfect label) is a bargain package and better recorded than his other version, though still short of the mark. The Schmidt is an acceptable, routine performance in coarse but bright sound. An example of the earliest American stereo records, the Page set is both antiquated in its engineering and musically mediocre.

Monophonically, there are the Klemperer on Angel 35329, a fine Kleiber edition on London LL 912, and other good ones by Jochum, Szell, and Von Karajan. There is a good chance that Angel will in time issue the 1937 Furtwängler in its "Great Recordings of the Century" series.

- G. Solti, Vienna Philharmonic Orch. LONDON CS 6092. \$4.98.
- E. Ansermet, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. LONDON CS 6037. \$4.98.
- F. Prohaska, Vienna State Opera Orch. VANGUARD SVR 106 SD. \$2.98.
- F. Reiner, Chicago Symphony Orch. RCA VICTOR LCS 2343 (with *Coriolan* overture). \$5.98.
- J. Keilberth, Hamburg State Philharmonic Orch. TELEFUNKEN TCS 18005. \$2.98.
- L. Maazel, Berlin Philharmonic Orch. DECCA DL 710006 (with *Overture for the Consecration of the House*). \$5.98.
- E. Kleiner, Royal Danish Orch. FORUM SF 70014 (with *Egmont* overture). \$2.98.
- W. Goehr, Radio Frankfurt Orch. HARMONY HS 11013 (with *Fidelio* overture). \$2.98.
- A. Boult, Philharmonic Promenade Orch. VANGUARD VSD 2003. \$5.95.
- B. Walter, Columbia Symphony Orch. COLUMBIA MS 6055 (with Sym. No. 4). \$5.98.
- A. Rodzinski, Philharmonic-Symphony Orch. of London. WESTMINSTER WST 14001. \$5.98.
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- O. Schmidt, Hamburg Symphony Orch. RONDO-LETTE SA 61. \$2.49.
- W. Page, Boston Festival Orch. RONDO ST 509. \$4.98.

Symphony No. 6, in F, Op. 68 ("Pastoral") (8 stereo versions)

This work, called by Tovey "a perfect classical symphony," was written in 1807-08 while the Fifth was being completed. The concert at which the two were given their premieres together must have struck its audience as being of almost intolerable richness. The *Pastoral* is clearly the most popular of the even-numbered members of the Nine, and, one should add, for ample reason.

Three points of view are found among the recordings available in stereo. The Klemperer is faultless in its classicism, yet better able than any of the others to unbend and make the most of Beethoven's joke with the village musicians. The *gemütlich* approach is managed with radiant lyricism by Walter, and with lesser success by Monteux, Dorati, and Boult.

Stokowski indulges in a pastoral rhapsody, conveyed in the historically important but sonically faded recording made in the mid-Thirties for the sound track of *Fantasia*. Documentary importance is all that can be claimed for this version, which is further disqualified by cuts.

Scherchen attempts classicism but achieves only chilling detachment, and something ghastly has happened to the tape of his performance. The Hurst, marred by a lack of strong middle registers and muddy ensemble in the climaxes, is a pleasantly safe reading with some good playing.

None of the sets has a really powerful storm; Walter and Klemperer come as

close to it as any. The listener will have to decide whether it is the classical or the bucolic countryside he wants and choose between them. Many who really love this work will want both.

Monophonically, the Toscanini edition, RCA Victor LM 1755, is probably a greater performance than any of the stereo sets and is likely to be unmatched in its statement of the classical approach. The Cluytens, Kleiber, Szell, and Von Karajan editions are all strongly competitive; the monophonic versions of the Walter and Klemperer can also more than hold their place in this company.

—B. Walter, Columbia Symphony Orch. COLUMBIA MS 6012. \$5.98.

—O. Klemperer, Philharmonia Orch. ANGEL S 35711. \$5.98.

—P. Monteux, Vienna Philharmonic Orch. RCA VICTOR LSC 2316. \$5.98.

—A. Dorati, Vienna Symphony Orch. EPIC BC 1038. \$5.98.

—A. Boult, Philharmonic Promenade Orch. VANGUARD VSD 2004. \$5.95.

—G. Hurst, Royal Danish Orch. FORUM SF 70018. \$2.98.

—H. Scherchen, Vienna State Opera Orch. WESTMINSTER WST 14049. \$5.98.

—L. Stokowski, Philadelphia Orch. DISNEY-LAND S 4101 C. \$4.98.

Symphony No. 7, in A, Op. 92 (8 stereo versions)

Written in 1811–12 and first played in December of the following year (on a program in the hall of the University of Vienna that also included *Wellington's Victory*), the Beethoven Seventh is probably the composer's most popular work after the C minor symphony. You may, if you like, think of it in terms of Wagner's "apotheosis of the dance," or you can amuse yourself by reading some of the programs that have been written after the fact to account for its consuming power. The truth is that the score is inexhaustible, and no single characterization can do it even partial justice.

Genuinely distinguished recordings of the Seventh are surprisingly uncommon when we consider the frequency with which the work is committed to discs. The usual failure is to turn it into a vehicle for orchestral or conductorial virtuosity and race it ragged; the next most common hazard is the opposite fault—the poky, overly solemn reading that never comes to life.

The unusual aspect of the current Seventh listings is the presence of two striking new editions produced by the same orchestra and engineers within a matter of a few weeks. Both are marked by the superlative ensemble playing and the exceptional sound we are beginning to take for granted in the Vienna Philharmonic's work for London, but the performances reflect the quite different musical outlooks of their respective conductors, Solti and Von Karajan. These differences even carry over into the equality of the ensemble, which has a transparency and brilliance for Solti and a richer but less clear-

cut blending of voices under Von Karajan.

There is a perfectly good argument for acquiring both these sets, since they contrast so effectively. My own preference goes to Solti, whose more intense and rhythmically firm performance has a cumulative effect that Karajan cannot match for all the opulent tonal quality he provides. Other listeners may choose differently.

The sound of the Walter set, acceptable enough if heard by itself, cannot stand direct comparison with either of the Vienna editions. The performance, however, is an interesting one, combining dynamic urgency with appreciation of the lyric element and of Beethoven's dramatic use of contrasts. Walter takes a familiar Central European view and plays the slow movement as a quasi-funeral march, an approach I do not share but am delighted to have documented by a conductor of his authority. Elsewhere there is abundant energy, always thoroughly controlled, and Walter's final movement is superior to either Solti's or Karajan's.

Steinberg's performance is one of persuasive orthodoxy, establishing a sure rhythmic movement at the outset and proceeding without surprises or disappointments to the final bar. It has clarity, drive, and excitement. The sonics are those of the middle of the hall, with the orchestral sound softened by distance, yet retaining acceptable force. This edition is the best of the earlier SDs.

Reiner's version was one of Victor's first stereo successes and is solidly rewarding. In contrast with its rivals, however, the pulse of the music seems to be imposed from without rather than developed from within as an integral part of the thematic material. Listen, for example, to the opening bars, which have a static quality when they should convey a sense of motion.

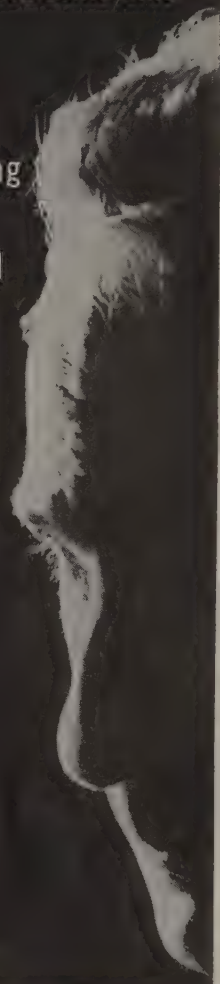
The Böhm performance tends to be stolid and dull. Its fatal weakness is in a lack of steady pulse; the engineers make things no better by altering the balances. In the Cantelli we have another early stereo disc, today primarily of interest as a documentation of the conductor. The performance has a firm singing quality and is quite worth having; the engineering reproduces the resonant spaces of the hall as capably as it adds depth to the orchestra.

The same fault and many of the same merits are found in the Boult edition, with its long, unfolding lyric line and lovely nuances that may reflect the lingering influences of Sir Adrian's master in the art, the great Artur Nikisch. The repeat in the scherzo at bar 149 is unique and worth noting. Students of interpretation will continue to admire this set.

Monophonically, both the Walter and Karajan are recommended. The Steinberg becomes noncompetitive because of a poor single-channel transfer. Of the monophonic-only editions, the Klemperer, Angel 35330, is outstanding among a number of good ones. The old Von Karajan set is, to my taste, a better reading of the score than the new one, and the Cluytens, Jochum, and Kleiber editions are all of merit. Finally, as a remarkable

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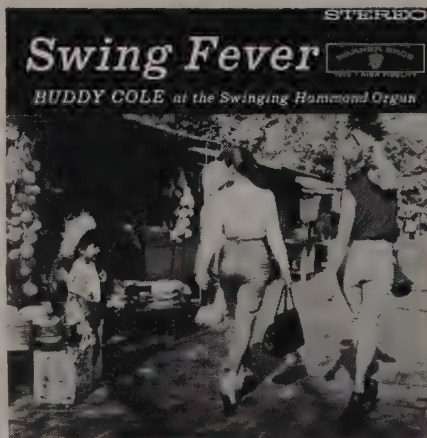
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—G. Solti, Vienna Philharmonic Orch. LONDON CS 6093. \$4.98.

—H. von Karajan, Vienna Philharmonic Orch. RCA VICTOR LDS 2348. \$5.98.

—B. Walter, Columbia Symphony Orch. COLUMBIA MS 6082. \$5.98.

—W. Steinberg, Pittsburgh Symphony Orch. CAPITOL SP 8398. \$5.98.

—F. Reiner, Chicago Symphony Orch. RCA VICTOR LSC 1991 (with *Fidelio* overture). \$5.98.

—K. Böhm, Berlin Philharmonic Orch. DECCA DGS 712005 (with *Coriolan* overture). \$5.98.

—G. Cantelli, Philharmonia Orch. ANGEL S 35620. \$5.98.

—A. Boult, Philharmonic Promenade Orch. VANGUARD VSD 2005. \$5.98.

Symphony No. 8, in F, Op. 93 (5 stereo versions)

Written simultaneously with the Seventh, Beethoven's second symphony in the key of F completed a pair of scores marking his return to the form after a lapse of three years. A third work was contemplated so that the 1804-08 trio might be matched by (say) an 1811-15 series, but all we know of the unwritten score is its intended tonality of D, the same as that of the Ninth Symphony of 1822-24.

Interpretative approaches to the Eighth can be identified as the large-scale (or "second Seventh") point of view and the small-scaled "walzer-laughter" outlook. I favor the former, though in the right hands the alternative can be persuasive.

By far the greatest Eighth available today is Klemperer's, a performance of majesty and strength that grows in stature with each rehearing. Unfortunately the two-channel version is virtually a catalogue of the flaws of EMI's stereo engineering, and it must be rejected in that form, whatever heart-break that renouncement may entail. (In case you're wondering, it doesn't break my heart at all. Giving up stereo is no hardship when the performance warrants it.)

With Klemperer out of the running there remain four editions that are acceptable examples of stereo engineering. Two of these, however, are hampered by the omission of the first-movement repeat. As in the case of the Fifth, I am going to be bearish about this. The repeat is necessary for the proper balance of the movement, and conductors and recording directors ought to include it. This leaves us with Keilberth and Jochum.

Both performances are excellent examples of their respective type—the Keilberth sweeping, large-scaled, and dynamic; the Jochum radiantly lyric and dancing—and both are acceptably recorded. The strings of Keilberth's orchestra, however, have a steel-like polish that only careful manipulations of tone controls can turn into something more

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pleasing, and the registration of the winds is weak. If sound is of prime importance, the Jochum is worth the extra three dollars.

The Walter and Munch sets suffer from the omission of the repeat and have the disadvantage of being hung as appendices on albums of the Ninth. Walter's performance is an attractive one, unique for its glow of Viennese humor and for the romantic, even sentimental, blush of emotion it communicates. Munch, in contrast, is all fire and drive, and his version is a compelling case for that interpretative approach. For sheer excitement it approaches the old Toscanini edition.

Monophonically, the Klemperer is on Angel 35657 and Toscanini's thrilling performance on RCA Victor LM 1757. The Scherchen, available in several couplings, also remains in the top grade. The monophonic Jochum, Decca DGM 12025, is another good one.

—J. Keilberth, Hamburg State Philharmonic Orch. TELEFUNKEN TCS 18004 (with Sym. No. 1). \$2.98.

—E. Jochum, Berlin Philharmonic Orch. DECCA DGS 712025 (with Sym. No. 1). \$5.98.

—B. Walter, Columbia Symphony Orch. COLUMBIA M2S 608 (with Sym. No. 9). \$11.98.

—C. Munch, Boston Symphony Orch. RCA VICTOR LSC 6066 (with Sym. No. 9). \$11.96.

—O. Klemperer, Philharmonia Orch. ANGEL S 35657 (with Sym. No. 1). \$5.98.

Symphony No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral") (6 stereo versions)

The Ninth is the only symphony from Beethoven's late period, and his sketches for it in 1822 marked a return to the form after

a lapse of a decade. Its first performance, in May of 1824, came just a little more than twelve years after the premiere of the Eighth. Despite its supreme place among his instrumental works, the Ninth has received few really successful recordings. Until the high-fidelity era its demands were simply too great for any engineer or conductor to overcome on discs, and none of the older sets even approximates the effect of the work in a hall.

Stereo appears to be the answer, but one must report with some sadness that at present not a single stereo edition of the score can be recommended without some reservations.

Klemperer's performance is clearly a great one. He has at his disposal a superb orchestra and choir and four excellent soloists. So far all is above reproach, but complications now ensue. This is not a performance that everyone will accept with equal



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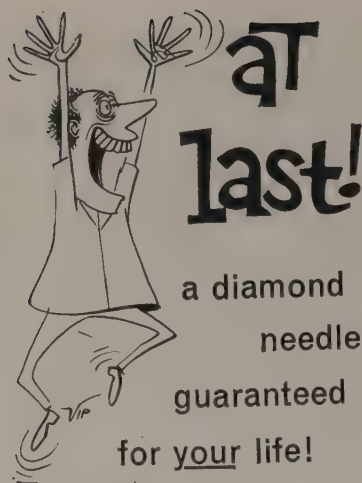
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grace. As evidence at hand we have the dissenting voice of Mr. John M. Conly, who dislikes the "churchly air" of the proceedings. "The Ninth," he insists, "is not an act of worship, it is a battle order." Plainly it is both: an act of worship to Klemperer and a call to battle for Conly—and for Toscanini, whose edition he favors.

Moreover, this is the least noticeably stereophonic of the six stereo versions listed here. Actually, once you become aware that the stereo masters must be played at considerably higher volume level than the monophonic, the differences in balance and perspective between the two become relatively unimportant, though the spaciousness of the stereo still registers. If you want pronounced "stereo effect," however, other editions produce it more forcefully.

If your idea of the Ninth is that found in the Toscanini set, you had better stick with it, imperfectly recorded as it is, or try one of the sets discussed below as an acceptable stereo alternate. If you are willing to see the Ninth in a different light, particularly if the now deleted Furtwängler edition made a special appeal, hear the Klemperer. If its reverent interpretative approach proves congenial, your problems are solved.

Let's assume that you want a more energetic reading than Klemperer provides. None of the five remaining sets is perfect, and it turns out that cost is no evidence of quality. Schuechter, whom you may never have heard of before, provides for \$5.95 a Ninth that, everything considered, is as fair a balance of ingredients as you can find currently. This is a performance based upon the resources of a German radio network and making use of a fine staff orchestra and chorus, a conductor of unquestionable capability, and soloists who sing with conviction and are able to do justice to their music. Technically, the recording shows the skill of an outstanding *tonmeister*, Dr. Erich H. Beumann, and the use of first-class equipment; the recorded sound is considerably better than that of the majority of its rivals.

The vigorous and deeply felt Fricsay edition provides the finest group of soloists that has probably ever been recorded in this work. If the recorded sound had not been marred by errors in balance, lack of firm middle registers, and other irritating shortcomings, this could have been a brilliant set. As things are, this is a Ninth that deserves a reasonable amount of admiration but is likely to be surpassed before too long.

The remaining three versions all demand compromises which, in the first two cases, seem excessive in terms of price and of the performers' reputations.

The three initial movements of the Walter set are on a par with the balance of his complete edition, but the finale, especially as heard in stereo, is a typical studio product in which an acoustically dead environment has been dressed up with fake echo. (The pre-production material on which I based my original review of this recording was considerably more pleasing.) As for the performance, it is shortsighted to call it anything

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less than a fine one and perhaps ungracious to demand more from a man of eighty-three, but Walter has done better in the past. A careful comparison with the finale of the 1953 recording now convinces me that the earlier version was a more forceful statement of the music and that the Carnegie Hall recording it received is still quite acceptable to the discriminating ear.

Any performance of the Ninth in which the scherzo emerges as the most powerful movement can be regarded as seriously lacking. This is what happens with the Munch, which, furthermore, has a weak chorus in the finale and two ineffective male soloists. The engineering, although not perfect, is really the strongest element in the Munch set, but you can go only so far on the basis of sound. Only those who want to be called to battle in the most urgent of voices will be happy with this performance.

Jergen's economy-priced edition has atrocious soloists and a lackluster choir, but the engineering holds up surprisingly well with its expensive rivals, and the performance is not at all a bad one. For practically the same money, however, the Schuechter is a better buy.

Monophonically there is, of course, the Toscanini, RCA Victor LM 6009; and even if it betrays its age, the sound is still more than adequate to carry the force of a great performance. Walter's older version is on Columbia ML 5200, and worth having for the final movement alone. Kleiber, Scherchen, and Von Karajan are still represented by editions that contain musical achievements equal to all the newer sets except the Klemperer—which is just about as fine monophonically as it is in stereo.

—O. Klemperer, Philharmonia Orch. (with A. Nordmo-Lövberg, C. Ludwig, W. Kmentt, H. Hotter, and Philharmonia Chorus). ANGEL S 3577 B (with Incidental Music to *Egmont*). \$11.94.

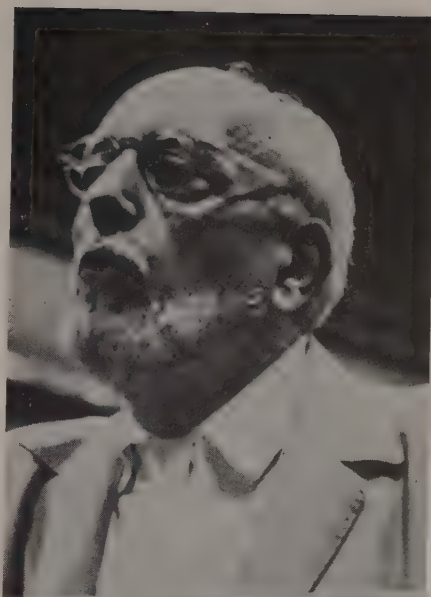
—W. Schuechter, Nord Deutsches Symphony Orch. (with H. Monti, M. von Loszny, F. Gueden, K. Ansbacher, and Norddeutscher Opera Chorus). STEREO-FIDELITY CC 202. \$5.95.

—F. Fricsay, Berlin Philharmonic Orch. (with I. Seefried, M. Forrester, E. Häfliger, D. Fischer-Dieskau, and Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral). DECCA DXB 7157 (with *Egmont* and *Leonore* No. 3 overtures). \$11.94.

—B. Walter, Columbia Symphony Orch. (with E. Cundari, N. Rankin, A. DaCosta, W. Wilderman, and Westminster Symphonic Choir). COLUMBIA M2S 608 (with Sym. No. 8). \$11.98.

—C. Munch, Boston Symphony Orch. (with L. Price, M. Forrester, D. Poleri, G. Tozzi, and New England Conservatory Chorus). RCA VICTOR LSC 6066 (with Sym. No. 8). \$11.96.

—W. Jergens, North German Philharmonic Symphony Society Orch. and Chorus (with L. Foster, H. Abel, R. Sommerfeld, and H. Hagenau). RONDO-LETTE SA 126/7. \$4.98.



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Reviewed by R. D. DARRELL

The following reviews are of 4-track 7.5-ips stereo tapes in normal reel form.

BERLIOZ: *Grande Messe des Morts, Op. 4* ("Requiem")

David Lloyd, tenor; Hartford Symphony Chorale, Hartt Schola Cantorum, and Hartford Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Mahler, cond.

●● VANGUARD VTP 1610 (twin-pack). 78 min. \$11.95.

I had hoped that this opportunity to re-evaluate the first Berlioz *Requiem* to appear in stereo might reveal more positive virtues than the few I could find in its stereo disc release. But while it is better processed here than in the relatively early stereo disc era pressings, and while the present more pronounced channel differentiations endow it with broader sonic perspectives, the performance itself can be praised only for its good intentions. It is hoped that the four-track tape repertory will speedily represent the heaven-storming *Requiem* far more adequately.

**BIZET: *Carmen: Suite*
†Ravel: *Bolero***

Hampshire Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Cyril Holloway, cond.

●● TELECTRO TT 409. 26 min. \$4.98.

Here is clean and brilliant sound, with well-marked channel differentiations and yet a fine natural over-all blend and balance. The "Hampshire Philharmonic," to be sure, is scarcely large—and its woodwind soloists scarcely polished—enough for a top-ranking *Bolero*, but this clean-cut, brisk, and well-organized performance avoids many of the interpretative sins of far better-known conductors. Furthermore, the *Carmen Suite* (properly confined to the Prelude, "La Garde montante," and three entr'actes) is one of the best relatively small-sized orchestral versions I know, both in its sonics and in Holloway's precisely controlled, expressive, and zestful readings.

GERSHWIN: *Porgy and Bess* (excerpts)

Margaret Tynes, Levern Hutcherson, and Avon Long; Orchestra, Warren Edward Vincent, cond.

●● TELECTRO TT 411. 27 min. \$4.98.

GERSHWIN: *Porgy and Bess* (excerpts)

Sammy Davis, Jr., Carmen McRae, and the Bill Thompson Singers; Orchestra, Jack Pleis, Buddy Bregman, and Morty Stevens, conds.

●● DECCA ST 7 8854. 38 min. \$7.95.

Modulated at a much more reasonable level than the recent Design/Stereo-Spectrum disc, the Telectro tape is also notably sweeter sonically, and boasts better frequency-extremes equilibrium as well as more distinctively differentiated stereoism. I can now recommend the program unqualifiedly as one of the best introductions to *Porgy and Bess* available at any price, and one exceptionally praiseworthy for its avoidance of rescorings and interpretative affectations.

I mention Decca's Davis-McRae program only for the contrasts it affords and as a not untypical example of what most present-day singers and arrangers seem to believe is necessary to update Gershwin's music for contemporary popular tastes. This too is well recorded, if with considerably harder and less attractive tonal qualities; but while both Davis and McRae are skilled performers, they seem self-consciously mannered and unconvincing here—indeed they hardly could be expected, given such tasteless and ineffectual arrangements to work with, to sound otherwise.

GROFE: *Grand Canyon Suite*

Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Øivin Fjeldstad, cond.

●● TANDBERG SMS S 21. 32 min. \$8.95.

This is apparently the same recording which first appeared a year or so ago in Camden LP and SD versions. The unexaggerated stereoism of the taping transparently reveals lyrical and warmly colored orchestral playing, but the pleasantest surprise is Fjeldstad's genuine affinity for American idioms. He not only avoids the overintensity and the preoccupation with sound effects of

which many American conductors are guilty, but he makes far more of the work's atmospheric qualities. Other recorded performances are more dazzling, but none I've heard makes the overfamiliar *Grand Canyon Suite* sound more freshly engaging—or more musically and pictorially attractive.

STRAVINSKY: *Pétrouchka; The Rite of Spring*

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

●● LONDON LCK 80006 (twin-pack). 68 min. \$11.95.

By happy chance, the first of the London/Ampex tape releases to reach me is a pairing of old friends: the third (1958) edition of Ansermet's world-acclaimed *Pétrouchka* and the second (also 1958) of his more controversial *Sacre*. There is nothing new that can be said about such well-known and widely discussed performances (except perhaps that this *Sacre*, if not as poetic or as exciting as some others, is surely inferior to none in the superb lucidity with which every intricate detail in the score is brought to life). And the recordings themselves have been so well processed in stereo disc form that the long-awaited tapings merely confirm previous evaluations of their merits. What tape does uniquely provide, however, is a just perceptibly sweeter high end, more solid mid- and low ranges, and more precise stereo localizations—plus, of course, the advantage of continued replays without the gradual quality deteriorations which even the best of disc playback equipment can only minimize.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Swan Lake, Op. 20* (excerpts)

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

●● LONDON LCK 80028 (twin-pack). 82 min. \$11.95.

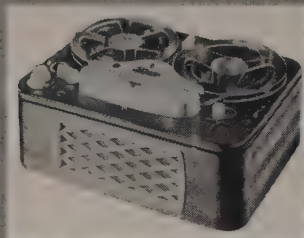
Although the other two ballets in Ansermet's Tchaikovsky trio are more nearly complete than this substantially cut Drigo-Petipa *Swan Lake* edition, and although the performance and recording qualities are uniformly opulent throughout the series, this tape confirms my earlier impression that the more extroverted and flamboyant music of *Swan Lake* is best of all suited to Ansermet's high-voltage interpretation. I had feared that the thrilling experience of first hearing this recording adequately reproduced might be diluted by familiarity,



Ansermet: tape confirms his triumphs.

Continued on next page

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TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

but listening to it again via tape proves to be even more rewarding.

The technical differences are slight enough, to be sure, but keen ears cannot miss the subtle refinements in sonic purity and channel differentiation. Nor, it must be conceded, can those same ears deny that, when the slightly less heavily modulated tape is reproduced at the same concert level as the stereo discs, the latter boast even less background noise. Of course the present music seldom is soft enough for this to be even noticeable—and in any case the discs' superiority in this respect is sure to be lost in time as the latter inevitably develop signs of wear. Yet even when the disc surfaces are wholly immaculate, the (perhaps infinitesimally) purer and more substantial tape sonics make the newest edition my own choice. But the vital consideration is that Ansermet's *Swan Lake*, in either medium, is a work not to be missed: on tape, as on discs, it is a triumph of matched musical and technological genius.

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The "Royal Farnsworth" orchestra may be a somewhat apocryphal credit, but at least we know the actual conductor and that the original recording was made for Design, which issued a stereo disc version. Listening to the new tape edition also proves that the original recording is actually much brighter and more vividly stereoscopic than it seemed in the lower-level earlier tape processing. One now appreciates much better the crisp playing, as well as relishes even more the conductor's insights into these *jeux d'esprit*. Misattributing those insights (in the earlier edition) to the composer himself was a far from unreasonable error, for if Vincent is less virtuoso than

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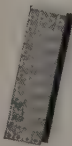
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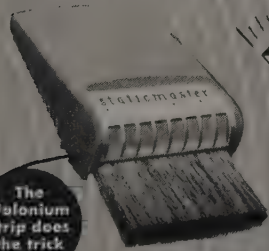


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Fiedler and Fennell in their celebrated Anderson releases, the more relaxed grace and verve of his readings are a very close match of Anderson's own.

"Destry Rides Again." Original Cast Recording. Decca ST7 9075, 49 min., \$7.95.

What I trust is only the first of many Decca Broadway-cast releases to appear on tape is very welcome. The mostly brash show music and its uninhibited performers can surely be relished here almost as well as on the stage itself—especially Jack Prince's jaunty *Hoop-de-Dingle*, Elizabeth Watts's and the "girls'" amusing *Respectability*, the male chorus' and a honky-tonk piano's rowdy *Every Once in a While*, and star Dolores Gray's sentimental ballad *That Ring on the Finger* and swaggering scena *Are You Ready, Gyp Watson?* And Decca deserves a special word of praise for its inclusion (by no means an invariable practice in tape releases) of the full liner notes.

"Gershwin in Brass." Brass Ensemble, Jack Saunders, cond. Everest T4 1047, 40 min., \$7.95.

Again I find that a tape release throws entirely new light on a master recording which was done less than justice by its earlier disc processing. Equable frequency balance and the warm brilliance with which an enormous variety of brass timbres are authentically reproduced and differentiated are certainly in evidence here. In addition, the channel separation is better in the taping, which enables it to make more of the effective antiphonal arrangements. The latter, to be sure, still sound overfancy (especially the travesty of the *Rhapsody in Blue*), and some of the readings do considerably less than justice to their great tunes. But Harvey Phillips' tuba solo in *I Got Plenty of Nothin'*, the chromatic timpani glissandi in *I Got Rhythm*, and the really virtuoso trumpet and trombone playing throughout make this a sound fancier's delight.

"Gold Coast Saturday Night." Saka Acouaye and His African Ensemble from Ghana. Elektra ETC 1503, 32 min., \$7.95.

If of perhaps scant ethnic value, this mostly popular Ghanaese program is of far more musical—and perhaps even documentary—interest than most of the recent African novelty and jazz recordings I've encountered. As composer, arranger, and versatile performer on drums, flute, and tenor sax, Acouaye is first of all a musical entertainer, and one who inspires his some ten-man ensemble into consistently high-spirited performances—all recorded with crisp clarity and wide dynamic range.

"Chico Hamilton Quintet." World Pacific WPTC 1002, 43 min., \$7.95.

An effective introduction to the world of cool jazz, this also represents the curious, but by no means unattractive, jazz capabilities of the ordinarily sedate cello (played here by Fred Katz). The slow pieces—like Katz's own *Reflections*—sometimes come perilously close to salon sentimentality, but the more lilting ones (*Beanstalk*, *Siete Cuatro*, and especially the zingily jumping

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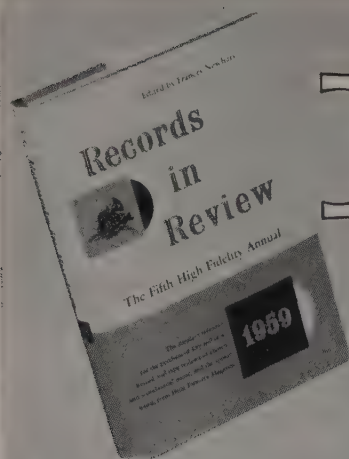
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TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

Satin Doll) have a fine verve. And throughout, the fanciful arrangements make optimum use of stereoistic opportunities for cross-channel responsiveness.

"Have Trumpet, Will Excite." Dizzy Gillespie and His Quartet. Verve VSTC 211, 46 min., \$7.95.

One of the most captivating introductions to modern jazz improvisation I know, one to delight the novice no less than the expert by its relaxed virtuosity and fancifulness. Happily, too, the star doesn't hog the stage, but gives his sidemen (especially Junior Mance on the piano and Les Spann on flute and guitar) ample opportunity for scarcely less original solos of their own. The tunes themselves are old stuff, but what happens to them here is all new. Listen to the fresh approach to the *St. Louis Blues*, for example, to discover what jazz imagination and skill can achieve at their best. And sometime during the reel, make an effort to escape the attractions of the music making itself, just so you can also appreciate the stereoistic excellence of the recording.

"Ros on Broadway." Edmundo Ros and His Orchestra. London LPM 70012, 32 min., \$6.95.

One of the first really topnotch stereo discs of 1958 was Edmundo Ros's *Rhythms of the South*, and for the last year or so his present program has been well up on the best-seller SD lists—for reasons which its taping makes obvious. Technically, this is a model of gleamingly lucent recording, with even more subtle channel differentiations than the SD version; musically, it is no less a model of first-rate dance performances, notable also for the good taste and ingenuity with which popular Broadway show tunes are translated into Latin-American idioms. London's pops series on tape here gets off to a flying start.

"Skin and Bones." Carl Stevens and His Orchestra. Mercury STA 60013, 27 min., \$6.95.

The "skins" are those of four percussionists' drums, of course, but the "bones" are, surprisingly, five trombones, which, with the leader's own trumpet and a piano, make up the present ensemble in now songful, now exuberant arrangements (mostly by Stevens himself) of familiar tunes. There is nothing especially original here, but the trombone choir adds distinctive sonorities, and there are many effective stereoistic exploitations of the admirably pure recording.

"Speak Low: The Great Music of Kurt Weill for Orchestra." Warner Brothers Orchestra, Maurice Levine, cond. Warner Bros. WST 1313, 28 min., \$7.95.

All praise to the galaxy of superb songs included here, to David Terry's richly colored arrangements, Levine's sympathetic performances, and to the glorious recording. The latter is opulent indeed on tape, although never exaggerated in its stereoism, yet it is hard even for a sound fancier to concentrate on the technology here while he revels in the musical magic of *Green-Up Time*, *Moon-Faced Starry-Eyed*, *Jenny*, and nine other memorable Weill masterpieces.

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New HFS5 2-Way Speaker System Semi-Kit complete with factory-built 3/4" veneered plywood (4 sides) cabinet. Bellows-suspension, 5/8" excursion, 8" woofer (45 cps. res.), & 3 1/2" cone tweeter. 1 1/4 cu. ft. ducted-port enclosure. System Q of 1/2 for smoothest freq. & best transient resp. 45-14,000 cps clean, useful resp. 16 ohms.

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CIRCLE 37 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

High Fidelity Newsfronts



by RALPH FREAS

WE HAD our first look—and listen—to Advanced Acoustics' 440 Bi-Phonic Coupler not long ago. It's a new loudspeaker whose unique design has brought queries from all over, so Abraham Cohen, president of the company, told us at a New York showing for dealers.

The uniqueness of the speaker is due primarily to the fact that it has neither cone nor baffle. The wooden front surface is itself the radiator, activated by a 2-in. voice coil. In a sense, this is like using the enclosure for a cone. The radiating panel is made of 3-in.-wide wooden strips, 3/32 of an inch thick. The strips are hand-selected to match each other and then assembled into one unbroken panel measuring fifteen by twenty-two inches.

"Can a wooden radiator sound better than a paper cone?" we asked Mr. Cohen.

"Like a violin," he said. "In fact, we choose our woods to be as near as possible to a bass violin in sound coloration."

Mindful that speaker sampling is a subjective experience much like wine tasting, we asked Mr. Cohen for his personal reaction to the speaker's qualities.

"Free," he said. "You have to hear it to understand what I mean. Other speakers have a boxed-in sound by comparison."

Advanced Acoustics claims that its Bi-Phonic Coupler can go down to 30 cps and "well beyond the range of hearing" on the other end.

"How do you get those lows without a baffle?" we wanted to know.

"People don't realize," Mr. Cohen replied, "that a piston in an unbaffled state will produce lows if the radiating panel is made big enough. Ours is big enough."

Judging clean low frequency response of the speaker was difficult in the large, boomy exhibit room used by the firm. We are going to get hold of one of these and try it in a familiar listening spot—at home.

ONE ADVANTAGE of dividing time between the New York and Massachusetts offices of this publication is the pleasant three-hour drive and the chance to drop in on manufacturers en route. Artizans of New England, maker of equipment cabinets and speaker enclosures (and kits for both), has its factory at midpoint on our trip, and recently we spent a pleasant two hours there.

Manuel Mundschen, "Munchie" to people in the industry, is the man in charge, and he told us he is readying complete speaker kits for the high fidelity market. The least expensive model, to sell at about \$35, contains an 8-in. speaker and knocked-down enclosure, including all finishing materials. Even if you are all thumbs, the unit goes together easily in about two hours, Munchie assured us. The more adept can assemble it in a half hour, he said.

A COMPANY named Nu-Tone recently sent us a complete set of pictures and literature on stereophonic sound systems assembled by them for, we assume, resale to builders and small contractors. The impressive thing about the systems from our point of view is their dimension. All of the components are

built to a specific width to allow them to be built into a wall between the studs. In fact, an essential element in Nu-Tone's product line is a bracket that can be nailed or screwed into the studs behind the wall proper to hold components in place.

Last time we knocked out a wall the studs were sixteen inches apart. And, to our knowledge, control amplifiers and tuners do not exceed that width. What we wonder is this: do manufacturers of these components produce an escutcheon plate an inch wider on either side for the user who wants to mount his system right in a wall? And how about a bracket, built to cradle a specific component, that can be mounted between the studs?

ANY MOTHS been chewing away at the damping material in your speaker enclosure? Frankly, we find it hard to believe that a moth could exist on the fibrous glass we've been using even if the creature could withstand the back waves set up by our loud level playing of *Ein Heldenleben*.

The reason we mention this at all is that we never thought of moths invading our enclosures until recently, when we received a press release from the American Felt Company, touting its 3/8-in.-thick product as an "ideal vibration damping material." The firm points to its many advantages, but the one that caught our eye was: "It is moth resistant."

"Hi-Fi Felt," as the firm refers to it, comes in "kit form." This is another way of saying that the felt is packaged—a square yard of it—in a large poly bag, and the user may cut it to the dimensions of his enclosure. Do your own arithmetic to see if you need one or two kits, keeping in mind that you have to cover all surfaces except the front.

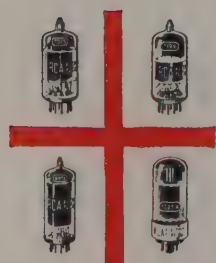
We tried calling Mr. R. Power Fraser, the man who sent us the press release, to determine the cost of "Hi-Fi Felt." He wasn't in, but our secretary was helpful.

"Golly," quoth she, "wool felt is awfully expensive if you want to make a skirt of it."

Not having tried the material, we cannot attest to Mr. Fraser's claim that felt is 50 to 75% more effective in damping low frequencies than other materials. We have a square yard of it, though, and will test it—unless our secretary shows up one day wearing an expensive moth-proof costume.

QUICKLY NOTED: "Ceramikes" is the way Sonotone tags its new ceramic microphones for amateur tape recordists who want to convert to stereo. The microphones come in matched pairs at \$36.75 a set. . . . Want to add remote controls to your stereo speakers? Audiotex is turning out dual controls with impedance-matching "L" pad circuitry, which completely turn off the volume in the OFF position. Controls are rated at 20 watts peak (10 watts continuous power). Screw-type terminals eliminate soldering. Controls are priced at \$10.50. . . . Heathkit has a couple of new economy-priced units in its AA-20 stereo preamplifier (\$34.95) and AA-30 14-watt stereo power amplifier (\$45.95)—14 watts per channel, that is. The firm also has a complete stereo control amplifier, the AA-50, rated at 25 watts per channel and priced at \$79.95.

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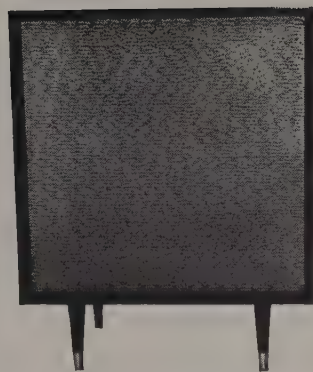


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Enclosure Kit Goes Together Quickly, Simply



FEW PROBLEMS have so nagged at owners of high-fidelity components as attractive cabinetry for housing components and speakers. Only a few manufacturers have concerned themselves with the problem. Among those who have is Artizans of New England, a small firm (located in Brookfield, Conn.) has supplied the need by making available both assembled cabinets and cabinets in kit form. (We might add that the Artizans have been in the custom audio business for ten years, designing and building cabinetry for well-known components manufacturers.)

Artizan's Series 1000, or Decorator Line, includes cabinets of four different designs—Contemporary, French Provincial, Early American, Sheraton Traditional. Each cabinet is assembled and finished, with or without doors, ready to house components or speaker units which can be used singly or in combination.

Here we are concerned with Series 500, and specifically with Model 501, a speaker cabinet. The units in the 500 series come in kit form, a triple blessing for those who like

to save on cost, have fun, and gain experience through building and finishing. For beginning do-it-yourselfers these kits are nearly ideal. Good finished results are delivered, and at no time does the builder have the feeling that he really should be an engineer to cope with the project.

The kits are offered in five basic cabinet types, with a choice of six fine hardwoods—mahogany, birch, walnut, korina, teak, and koa. Prices vary with the wood. The kit we received was mahogany and sells for about \$60. For the less ambitious and less dexterous, the kits can be bought assembled and finished for an additional \$15 to \$25, depending on the model.

All loudspeaker enclosures are ruggedly built infinite-baffle type. Tunneled bass reflex adapter kits and speaker adapter rings are available, however, for those who wish to depart from the intended usage of the original design.

Artizans of New England maintains a special installation, tuning, and testing service for all makes of loudspeakers. A written

word to the company will bring assistance to the hobbyist desirous of knowing the proper speaker for his enclosure.

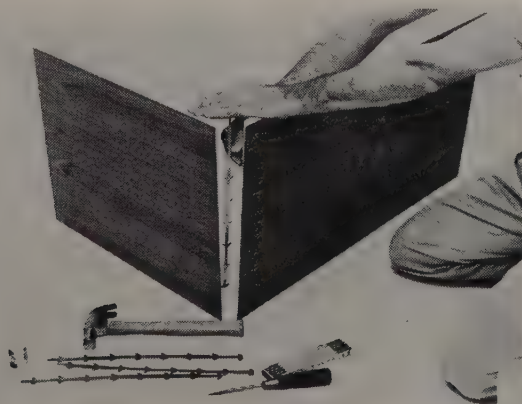
The Model 501 speaker cabinet is an infinite-baffle, two-speakers. The speakers are a 15-in. woofer and an 8-in. mid- and upper-range tweeter.

Outlined below are the general construction procedures for building the 501.

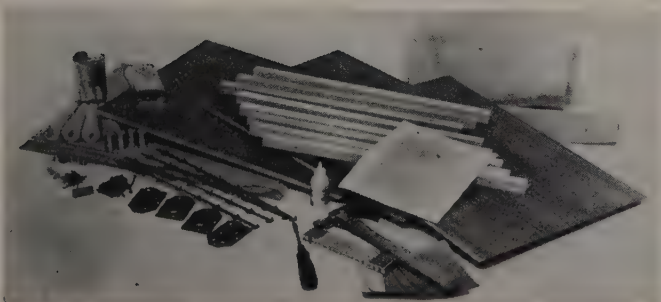
Construction Notes

First, an admonition which even the most experienced kit builder occasionally forgets: check all parts against the manufacturer's parts list. If a part is missing, now is the time to find out about it. Next in line, familiarize yourself with all parts and construction notes. This task performed, you will have eliminated many chances for mistakes by gaining an over-all picture of the steps involved and the order in which they should be taken.

At this point put something on the floor to protect the wood from becoming scratched—an old blanket or rug will do nicely. And



{Below, left} All parts are precut, ready to assemble. The wise do-it-yourselfer checks all parts against inventory sheet provided. {Left} Unique metal "fishbone" fits into receiving slots in both sides of mortised corner. "Fishbone" is screwed tight, pulling mortise together for perfect joint, and permanent reinforcement. {Below} Nearly finished. Note generous use of fibrous glass damping material, inside cabinet frame. Stapling gun makes quick work of affixing grille cloth if assembler has trouble pulling cloth taut and hammering at the same time, as shown here. Only tools needed were: hammer, screwdriver, and ruler.





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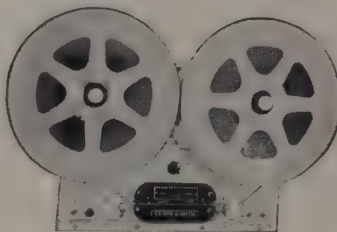


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finally, a few tools ready to use: a hammer, a screwdriver, and two pieces of cloth—one wet, one dry—to remove excess glue. You are ready for work.

The assembly instructions next direct you to nail cleats to the inside of the side and top panels. (Should you wish to make the cabinet a little more rugged, you can substitute screws for nails. This will, of course, necessitate drilling holes. If you use a 1½-in. #8 flathead screw, the drill need be no longer than ⅝ in.) I followed instructions and used nails, but to insure easier nailing and to reduce the chance of splitting a cleat I drilled ⅛-in. holes in all cleats where nails were to be used.

In mounting cleats be sure to use the exact figures stated. Rear cleats are to be nailed ¾ in. from the rear edge. This allows a flush fit of the rear panel. All cleats are to be nailed ⅝ in. from inside miter edge on the right of each cabinet panel. This is very important, for when the cabinet is put together the cleats interlock with each other and any miscalculation can cause the corners of the enclosure to fit improperly.

After gluing and nailing all cleats in place, you are ready to assemble the body of the enclosure. Here is where you will witness a unique piece of engineering. The four sections of the cabinet are now joined by what is called a steel fishbone. This remarkable device enables you to put all sections together simply by applying glue to the mitered joints and tightening screw caps on the end of each fishbone. I was delighted with the professional results obtained—the mitered corners fit perfectly. The back is then put in place to square up the cabinet.

While the cabinet is drying the instructions suggest, as the final step, that the grille cloth be applied to the speaker mounting board. When doing this make sure the cloth is stretched as tight as possible around the board. Do not let an excess of cloth build up at the corners as this will interfere with the proper fit of the grille. If you plan to change the speaker arrangement, the changes should be made before you apply the grille cloth.

The kit includes finishing oil and black varnish with complete instructions for their use. The heddle oil used on the cabinet body imparts a beautiful glow to the mahogany. The black varnish frames the front of the cabinet and covers the four brass-tipped legs. About four coats of oil and varnish, with sanding between coats, give a very professional finish.

To insure an airtight enclosure I went further than the instructions and used caulking compound on all the inside joints. After doing this the baffle and speakers were installed and the back was screwed in place.

Construction time was about three hours exclusive of finishing.

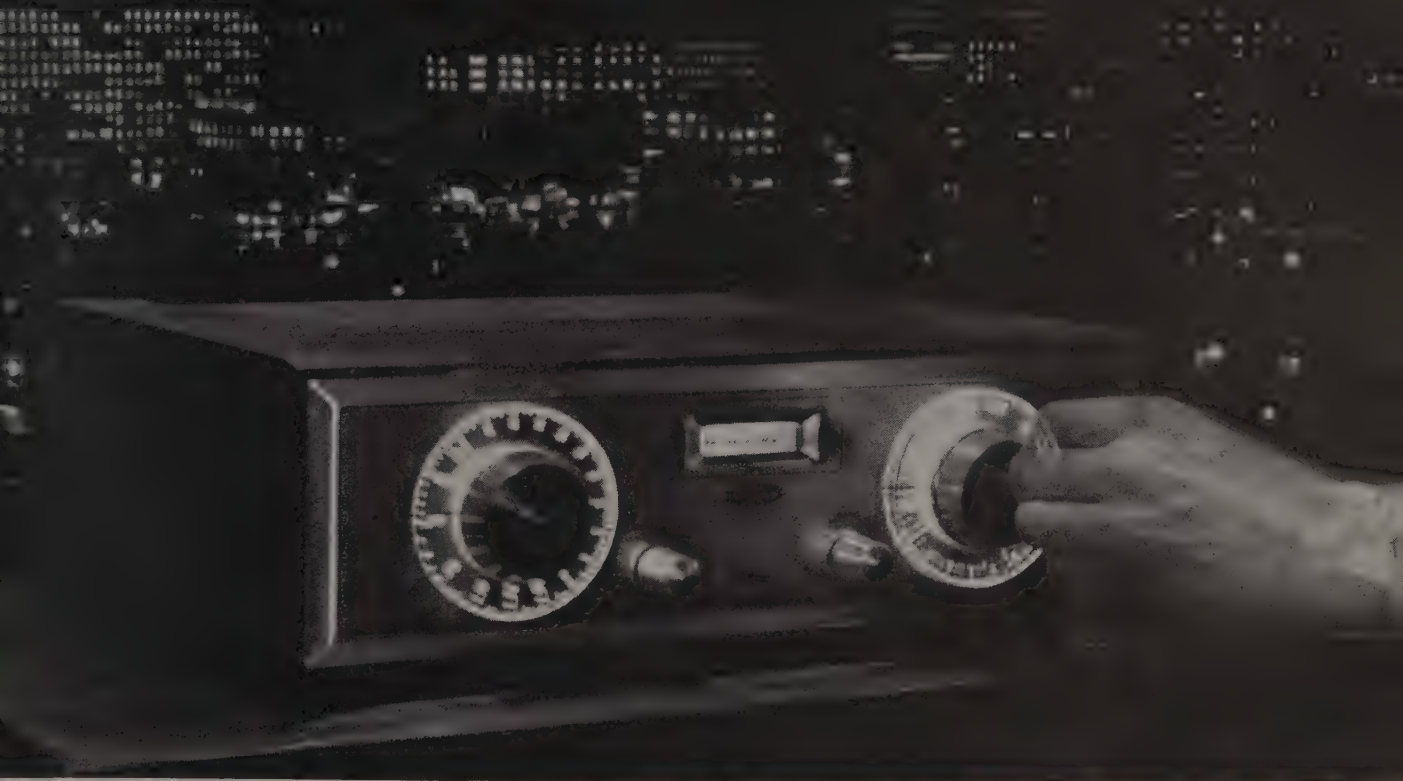
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The HF Report on the Bell 6060 amplifier (February, 1960) was in error in stating the price of the unit as \$146.65. The correct price is \$219.95.

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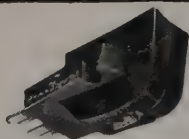
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TOSCANINI AND FURTWÄNGLER

Continued from page 39

latter. And dozens of instances crowd into the mind: the great brassy climaxes in the first movement of the Ninth, taken with pace and power, overwhelming in their menacing intensity; the entry of the last movement of the Fifth; the tremendous rhythmic drive of the Seventh. Above all can be noted his overwhelming success in the Gloria, Et Resurrexit, and Agnus Dei of the Mass, and his reading of the last movement of the Ninth—an all-out thrust depending for its success, one might say, on sheer physical impact covering up the rather heartless way it charges through the slow passages. To this tradition we may add Toscanini's unique contributions, in many ways a heightening of this same thing: knife-edge sforzandi; an intensity of over-all construction based on a relating of the basic rhythmic unit to the metrical construction of the whole rather than on an ability to see a design from outside.

This is almost un-Beethovenian Beethoven. One aspect of him is here, almost to excess: the deadly serious hurler of thunderbolts. But the lyric artist, the tender singer, the boisterous humorist, and above all, the mystical weaver of evanescent dreams, is in abeyance. There is, in Toscanini's complete recording of the nine symphonies, only one true adagio—and that in a section where it is actually out of place, the introduction to the first movement of the Fourth. This is marked adagio certainly, but is here taken at something like largo; it should move towards the allegro, and be a part of it. Toscanini's account is altogether too melodramatic for this lightweight symphony, and when he comes to the allegro, he distorts it by his military rhythm, his deadly serious, almost tragic performance. The whole reading of this symphony, a gay and romantic comedy touched with the wistfulness of love, is forced by procrustean methods into Toscanini's somewhat extrovert conception of the heroic. How wrong this great genius of the baton could sometimes be. He could not, or would not, give a Beethoven slow movement its full weight; he was almost incapable of humor. He was capable of apocalyptic vision, but if his subject was not apocalyptic, he tried to make it so. The vision of the inner eye, the solitary communing of the creature with its creator that is Beethoven's crown of glory, was beyond him.

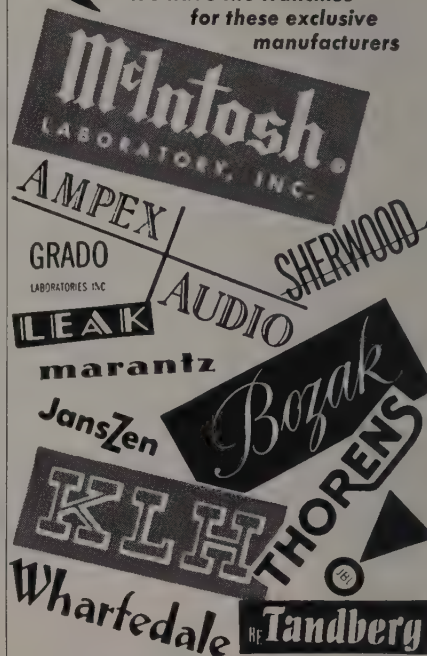
Furtwängler's outlook on Beethoven, as I have said, was modified by a very different operatic tradition, that of Wagner. (Incidentally the greatest all-round Beethovenian of our time—Weingartner—was censured for his curiously light and undramatic Wagner.) But if Wagner lay in the direct Beethoven tradition, he also modified it with his slow and heavy tempos; and a conductor used to playing Wagner has to mind he does not use the same methods in the much more

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*See HI-FI Magazine, May 1959, page 39

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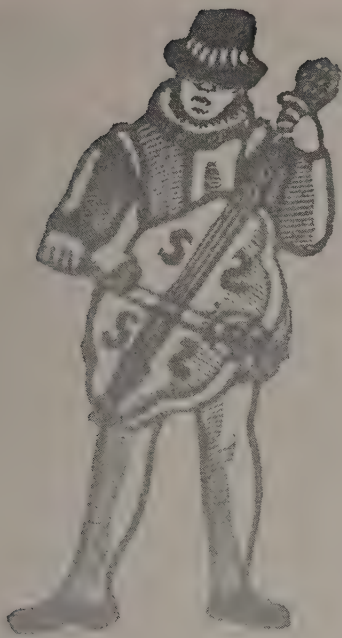


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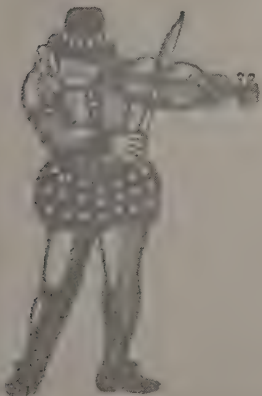
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athletic Beethoven. Here is where Furtwängler is at fault, and where Toscanini scored, for whatever else is wrong with Toscanini's Beethoven, his textures are beautifully light and athletic. Yet, after all, Wagner's operatic tradition derived from Beethoven himself. Although the drama of opera and the drama of symphony are ordinarily poles apart (in opera the music illustrates drama, in symphony the music *is* drama), in Wagner the drama is in the symphonic web itself.

Beethoven is, of course, bigger than all his conductors. In the slow movement of the Fourth, the most elusive in all his symphonies, both Toscanini and Furtwängler show their characteristic failings. Furtwängler just pulls it to pieces, and the result is most odd; Toscanini gives, to my mind, the most unnerving piece of cold-blooded playing on record. Superlative readings of this movement have been given by three conductors: Beecham, Weingartner, and, oddly, Mengelberg. Beecham and Weingartner always play gently romantic music well, but the performance of the somewhat coarse and blatant Mengelberg is a surprise. Beecham excels in even number Beethoven, but his Third, Fifth, Seventh, and Ninth are quite unidiomatic. He is not really a Beethoven conductor at all, but I personally prefer his Second, Fourth, and Eighth to those of all other conductors. If there is a better Sixth than Beecham's, it is that of Bruno Walter, the embodiment of the Viennese tradition (and specifically Viennese, not even Austrian, let alone German).

Toscanini's peculiar genius is in accord with the times; we have much admiration for speed, drama, and impersonal aspiration. Yet it is the spiritual quality of Beethoven's works that gives them that extra dimension of greatness, and this metaphysical tradition is part of the equipment of the great German and Austrian conductors: Furtwängler, Klemperer, Knappertsbusch, Weingartner, Walter. Furtwängler, it seems to me, had qualities of brain, heart, and spirit that, in spite of his faults, brought his readings very near to the heart of the great Beethoven of the third period. The gramophone enables us to make comparisons. We can hear Nikisch's Fifth, and regret that Mahler, who could have recorded, did not; we can hear the readings of conductors young, old, and dead, of every nation, side by side, and use their readings as we might any other musicological tool. We can greet newcomers and see if they have learned Toscanini's lesson of clarity while retaining the spiritual quality of the German tradition.

What were the tempos like? They varied; varied with the most protean of all composers' protean progeny, each demanding a world of unique concentration, each uniquely different. An army of musicians, belonging to every nation and tradition (and, for the record collector, an ever widening span of time), unite in bringing us this man—who contained multitudes, whose time was eternity, whose nation was mankind.

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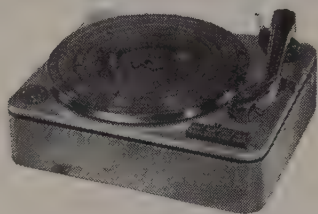


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BONN

Continued from page 43

salons, reduce this sum to such an extent that only the bare minimum remains. As for the extravagance which one fears will tempt any young man who goes into the great world, I think I can answer for that to Your Serene Electoral Highness: for a hundred circumstances have confirmed me in my opinion that he is capable of sacrificing everything quite unconstrainedly for his art. In view of so many tempting occasions, this is most remarkable, and gives every security to Your Serene Electoral Highness—in view of the gracious kindness that we expect—that Your Highness will not be wasting any of your grace on usurers as far as Beethoven is concerned. In the hope that Your Serene Electoral Highness will continue his further patronage of my dear pupil by acceding graciously to this my request I am, with profound respect,

Your Serene Electoral Highness'
most humble and obedient
Joseph Haydn

Capell Meister von Fürst Nicolas Esterházy
Vienna, 23rd November 1793

The Elector's rather horrifying answer explains, no doubt, why Beethoven soon gave up any idea of returning to Bonn:

[TO HAYDN FROM MAXIMILIAN

FRANZ, the Elector of Cologne. German draft in a secretary's hand, corrected in the Elector's hand.*]

Nomime Serenissimi.

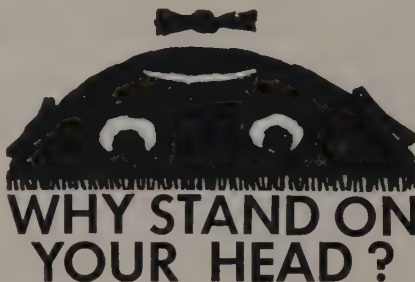
To Prince Esterházy's Kapellenmeister in Vienna. d.d. Bonn the 23rd of December 1793.

I received the music of the young Beethoven which you sent me, together with your letter. Since, however, with the exception of the Fugue, he composed and performed this music here in Bonn long before he undertook his second journey to Vienna, I cannot see that it indicates any evidence of his progress.

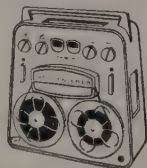
Concerning the money which was hitherto available for his subsistence in Vienna, it is true that this consists only of 500 fl.; but apart from these 500 fl., his salary here of 400 fl. has been paid to him the whole time, so that he will always receive 900 fl. annually. Therefore I do not see at all why his financial circumstances should be as reduced as you have indicated to me.

I am wondering if he would not do better to begin his return journey here, in order that he may once again take up his post in my service: for I very much doubt whether he will have made any important progress in composition and taste during his present sojourn, and I fear that he will only bring back debts from his journey, just as he did from his first trip to Vienna.

Pondering all these events as we toured the museum, we next approached a trim house next door in the Bongasse. A brass plate neatly lettered "Beethoven-Archiv" was next to the doorbell. The Archiv has an enormous publishing schedule in front of it: headed by Professor Schmidt-Görg and a staff of trained specialists, they intend (a) to reissue the entire works of Beethoven in a critical edition; (b) to issue all the sketches in a scientific edition, with commentary; (c) to complete publication of the "conversation Hefte," the little notebooks in which Beethoven and his friends exchanged views after the composer was deaf; these Hefte have never been published complete. The curious thing about this Beethoven-Archiv



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is its complete isolation as far as performances are concerned. Paul Badura-Skoda told us, when we met last autumn in Lon-

*The original letter, dictated to a secretary, is still more unfriendly: for example, in the last paragraph, the Elector had written: "for I very much doubt if he can have learnt anything from you."

don, that there are in Bonn hitherto unknown cadenzas to the Fourth Piano Concerto, which the Archiv does not allow anyone to copy; they were left, we found out, by a rich Swiss collector with the express instructions to "make them available to the public." I asked one of Professor Schmidt-Görg's bespectacled assistants if this were true about the cadenzas; he disappeared for a moment and returned with the Herr Professor personally. It was a curious conversation. We stood up when the Herr Professor entered, but he waved us to our chairs, though he remained standing throughout the two-minute interview.

We asked him about the cadenzas. Would the Beethoven-Archiv provide microfilms?

"Of course not," he answered crisply. "They will be published in the complete edition, and until then, pianists can wait."

We tried to continue the conversation.

"You will excuse me," the Herr Professor said, without a trace of a smile. "We are very busy here, we have much to do. . . ."

We got up to leave. The young assistant started to say, "You won't mind if I don't take you down, but we have. . . ."

"Yes," we said, "you have so much to do," and we turned around to say good-by to the Herr Professor. But the Herr Professor had already left.

LOUDSPEAKERS

Continued from page 49

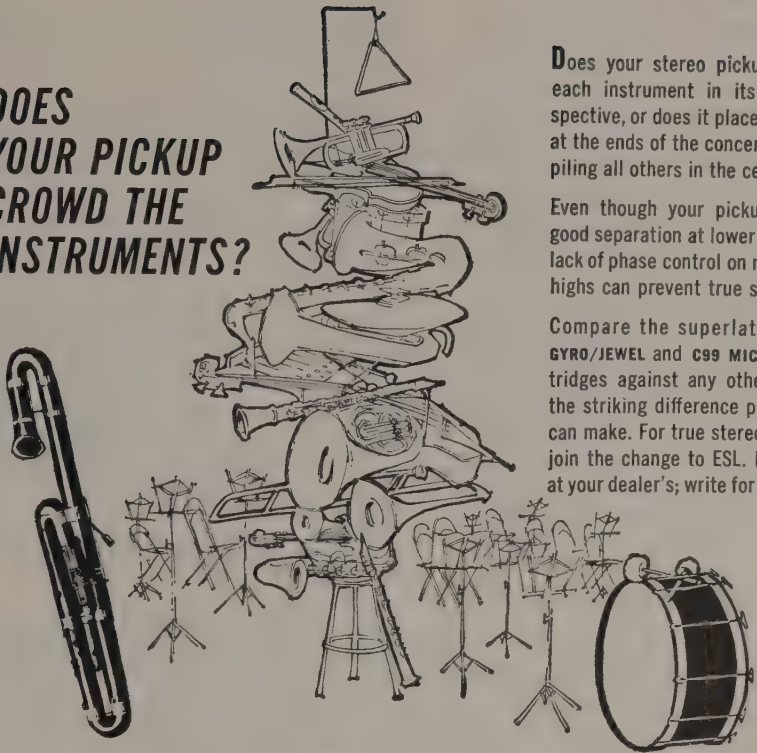
placement of speakers in the room; and the kind of room. Since the functioning of a loudspeaker depends on these variables, how then can we expect to find one single "best" loudspeaker? We can't.

Consequently, evaluation of a loudspeaker should go further than such statements as, "It has a reasonably good frequency response and dynamic range, with about average distortion," with some comment on its directivity. It should aim at advising the prospective buyer whether he wants a particular model or not, and giving him some idea how best to compare it with other good candidates.

To this end, HIGH FIDELITY's test reports will continue to give loudspeaker data including frequency response, polar pattern (giving directivity), details of low frequency distortion, and a relative efficiency figure. This will enable the reader to make a reasonably intelligent comparison between the results of any two units tested. Also to be included will be results of tone burst tests where these clarify the frequency response picture.

Further, this journal's testing services will make extensive listening tests, bearing in mind that listening rooms and program material vary. The hope is, of course, to develop a reporting service that provides the potential loudspeaker purchaser with the best assistance possible.

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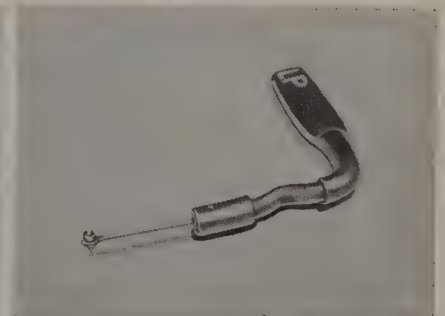
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A GOODLY FELLOWSHIP

Continued from page 36

devotion, I bought Volume I of the Schnabel Sonata Society series. I think it cost either \$15 or \$17.50; a fortnight's food bill when my earnings were alternating between infinitesimal and nil. I had to sell it, a grievous necessity, when my shoes wore out, job hunting. (I made a profit, though, since it had been a limited subscription issue.) (And I lost the profit by having made a deposit on Volume II, which I couldn't reclaim.)

What I did mostly, like many another in the mid-1930s to whom the \$10 price of an album was astronomical, was become a kadothy. This is a term of odium, coined by Remy Farkas, late of London Records but then a salesman at the New York Band Instrument Company and the Liberty Music Shop. It meant a character who comes in and plays records during lunch hour, without either the means or the intent to buy any. Not that we never bought any, of course; I can recall acquiring the Schnabel-Sargent *Emperor* one disc at a time, about three weeks apart. But my education came largely from lunchtime listening in booths.

In the main the clerks were kind to us, but there was one set they wouldn't let us play, the Stokowski Ninth. Partly this was because the choral passages showed wear very quickly, but mostly I think it was because the last disc was a one-sider, and on the vacant side Victor had unaccountably dug a series of very deep concentric grooves. The record would break if it got a harsh glance. The clerks were not unreasonable to deprive us of this. Eventually I had to buy the album. It was a wonderful thing. The soloists were so-so, but the Philadelphia Orchestra was magnificent.

As the years moved toward the war, times got better and record prices were cut in half (you must realize that a twelve-inch single, in 1935, cost \$2.00, so that an *Eroica*, for instance, cost \$14), which made a difference. And I think electrical recording slowly began to impress musicians. It was then that Toscanini made his epochal Seventh (with the Philharmonic), then his Fifth, and the Violin Concerto (with the new NBC, and with Heifetz soaring as soloist in the latter work). And that Bruno Walter outpointed Toscanini with one of the really great recorded *Eroicas*. The Weingartner symphonies, now complete, arrived in their glory. So did the list of quartets, played by the Busch group. I didn't shop much for piano sonatas; having heard Schnabel I wanted Schnabel or nothing. I got the latter.

After the war and before LP, I can recall nothing toweringly impressive. And, if it comes to that, it seems to me that the LP decade has been more marked by great competence than much inspiration. I blame a little of this on tape ("We can patch that later") and on the consequent businesslike and strainless atmosphere of recording sessions. It may be fine for Strauss waltzes, but if you are going to make a singular gift to

posterity of a Beethoven symphony, I think you ought to be absorbed to the point of edginess, or of rapture. Because when he wrote the thing, believe me, he was.

As result, I have the impression that in the last ten years recorded performances have been, in general, more flawless and less moving than concert performances involving the same people. Maybe it's always been so, but I think for a while, in the 1930s, it wasn't. No doubt that is progress; if so, you can have it.

Still there were some treasures, worth preservation (or a search) now that stereo has arrived to change everything once more. Not everyone agrees with me on the merits of Toscanini's Ninth. Yet never before (and



I guess never since) have I heard quite the apocalyptic quality he brought out in the opening movement. And that is necessary, if the symphony is to tell its whole story. Really gifted ears—or inner ears—could hear this without good interpretation, I wot, because both Schubert and Brahms did, and wrote variants on it.

Then there was the fiery and enthralling record of the *Music for Egmont*, complete, by Hermann Scherchen, the Vienna State Opera Orchestra, and some dedicated soloists. I do wish this could be done again, though I do not suppose it would turn out so well. Something I think Scherchen and Toscanini have had in common is the ability to put pressure on performers until they do better than they even suspected they could. It is a rare and probably rather dreadful ability. The same kind of pressure, but self-applied, came to general fruition for us finally when the Schnabel sonatas and piano concertos were offered to us on RCA Victor LP reprints.

Something quite different is evident in another pair of offerings. One is the Curzon-Knappertsbusch Fourth Concerto, for London, a sort of miracle which cannot even serve as model for another try, since it was a spontaneous play-through, and every man there in that hour was a poet in a creative mood. You cannot command such ecstatic happenings to repeat themselves. The other marvel was Clemens Krauss's reading, again for London, of the four *Fidelio* overtures, which (especially *Leonore* No. 1) give a unique glimpse at Beethoven's ideal of what a woman should be. No one else has seen or done this.

The Budapest Quartet made their profoundly penetrating, perhaps definitive, march through the sixteen quartets. Artur Balsam and Joseph Fuchs did the same task

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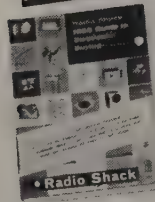
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A GOODLY FELLOWSHIP

Continued from preceding page

for the piano-violin sonatas, as did Pablo
Casals and Rudolf Serkin for the piano-cello
sonatas. There was not much more. The
Toscanini *Missa Solemnis* was inspired but
raucous, and Erich Kleiber died suddenly
and broke the hopes—then—of a *Fidelio*
which would have satisfied us at last. Amen,
then, to monophonic microgroove.

Now comes the sad and glad part. With
the stereophonic revolution, the catalogues
are being riddled like Braddock's redcoats
in the Cumberlands. *Egmont's* down, and
Schnabel's gone, and Krauss dispersed. This
has been implicit in the change. Musical
values are musical values, but they become
merely historical when something like stereo
invades listening, to change the whole sub-
stance of music heard at home. One can per-
ceive a rightness, musically, and still miss,
with one's ears, another rightness that should
be there.

All is not lost, or even going aback. One
thing the LP decade did was make it possible
for every performer easily to hear all other
performers he wanted to, a very beneficial
process. I think there is a sort of surge
upward. I cannot be sure yet. However, I
have listened lately, with attention and in-
creasing joy, to the Bruno Walter re-record-
ing—stereophonic—of the symphonies. I
simply cannot find much fault. As a one-
man performance of the canon, I find it the
best that has been done. And it only adds
glow to the prospect to say that I think that
his Third is matched by Klemperer's new
one, his Fifth by Ansermet's, and his
Seventh by Karajan's. (I left out the Second,
which is matched by both Beecham's and
Jochum's.) Nothing to wail about there;
and let's give the other folk some time. The
Budapests already have remade the first set
of quartets, Opus 18, and are at work on
the rest. Kindred big undertakings are
bound to come along. Beethoven continues
to spur our minds and support our spirits,
and there will be no stop to his music on
records until there is a stop to that.



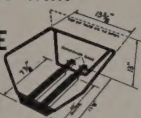
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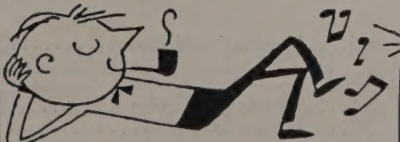
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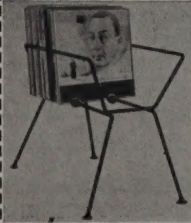
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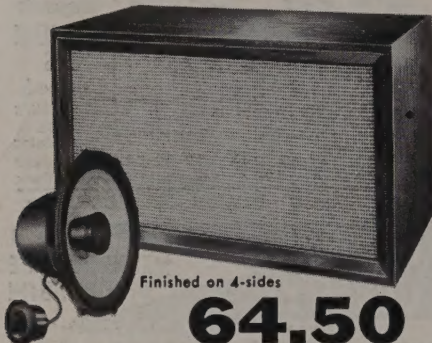
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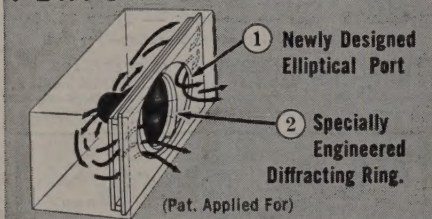
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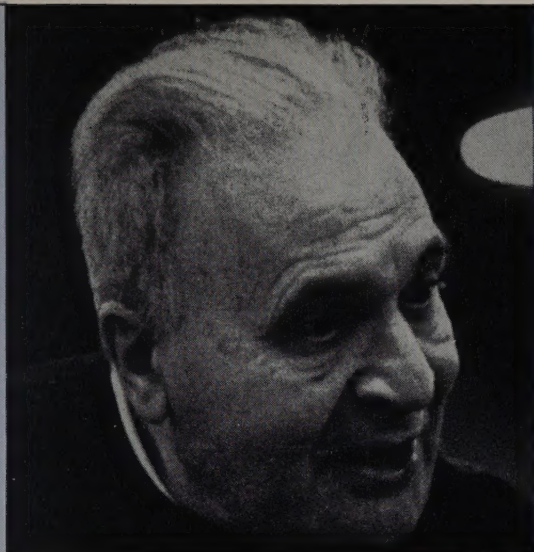
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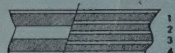
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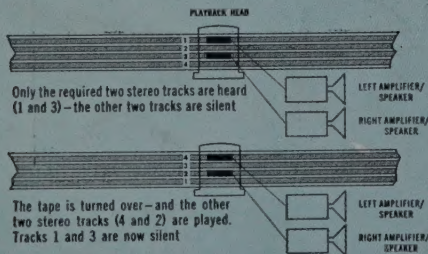
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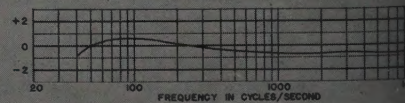


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